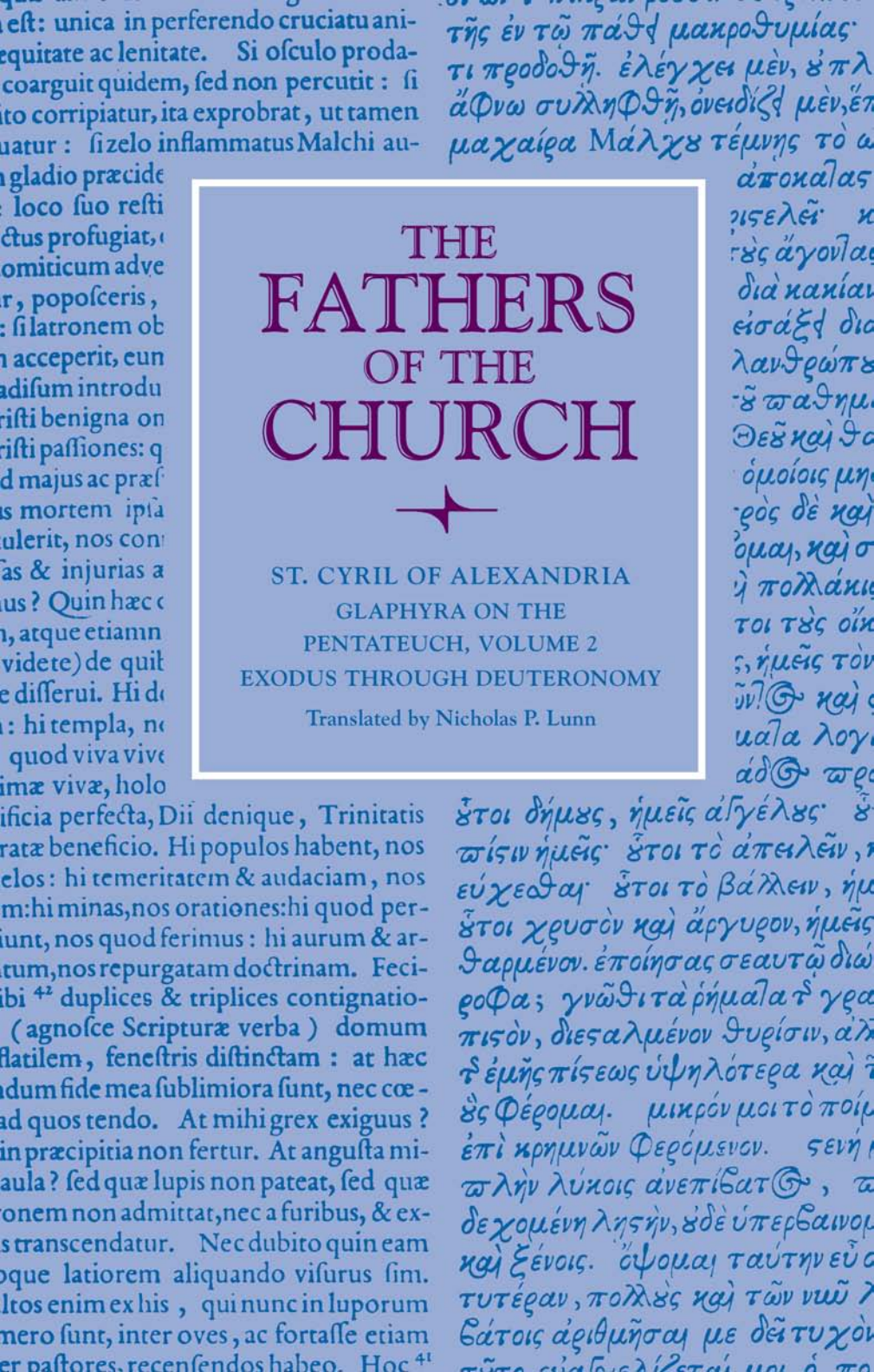
THE
FATHERS
OF THE
CHURCH
ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA
GLAPHYRA ON THE
PENTATEUCH, VOLUME 2
EXODUS THROUGH DEUTERONOMY
Translated by Nicholas P. Lunn

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

A NEW TRANSLATION

VOLUME 138

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A NEW TRANSLATION

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ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

GLAPHYRA ON THE PENTATEUCH, VOLUME 2

EXODUS THROUGH DEUTERONOMY

Translated by

NICHOLAS P. LUNN
Spurgeon's College

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA PRESS
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CONTENTS

Preface vii

Abbreviations ix

Select Bibliography xi

Glaphyra on the Pentateuch, Volume 2: Exodus through Deuteronomy

Book Eight: Exodus, Part 1 3

Book Nine: Exodus, Part 2 29

Book Ten: Exodus, Part 3 84

Book Eleven: Leviticus 128

Book Twelve: Numbers 168

Book Thirteen: Deuteronomy 210

INDICES FOR VOLUMES 1 AND 2

General Index 241

Index of Holy Scripture 253

PREFACE

With regard to historical, theological, philological, and textual matters relating to Cyril of Alexandria's *Glaphyra in Pentateuchum,* the reader is referred to the full introduction by Gregory K. Hillis and the preface by Nicholas P. Lunn at the beginning of volume 1.

In the preparation of this second volume, the partial translation of the *Glaphyra* on Exodus by Evie Zachariades-Holmberg (see select bibliography) was consulted. A comparison with the present translation, however, will reveal that there is little in the way of dependence.

ABBREVIATIONS

AcT	*Acta theologica*
AnBib	Analecta Biblica, Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Rome
CCR	*Coptic Church Review*
FOTC	The Fathers of the Church, Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NIV	New International Version
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NKJV	New King James Version
NLT	New Living Translation
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
OT	Old Testament
PG	Patrologia Graeca, ed. J.-P. Migne, Paris, 1857–66
PL	Patrologia Latina, ed. J.-P. Migne, Paris, 1878–90
RA	*Recherches augustiniennes*
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
Vg	Vulgate

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GLAPHYRA ON THE PENTATEUCH, VOLUME 2

EXODUS THROUGH DEUTERONOMY

BOOK EIGHT: EXODUS, PART 1

Concerning the birth of Moses

Having just concluded, as best as we were able, the book of Genesis with a great deal of attention to detail, and having done so "from strength to strength," as we sing in the Psalms,[1] we did not, as they say, let the pen, well practiced in good and hard labor, have even a brief respite, but we persuaded it that it had to strive further. For, if God wills and grants the wisdom, we will now deal with the sections in Exodus that can be seen to have been omitted when we composed our moral exhortation.[2] It was then thought best to avoid lengthy discourse, as we wanted to show how we are to understand the manner of worship in spirit and in truth. For having delineated each of the sections that comprise the five books of Moses, and having first carefully considered the matter in them intended for our contemplation, we conveniently[3] gathered together those things in some way necessary for moral guidance [388] and things that were especially profitable, in what I would say was the most appropriate order for each matter. Yet those things by means of which the mystery of Christ seems to some degree to be depicted in advance, albeit in shadows relating to the law, we reserved for the work to be written later. In regard to this I know, beloved Palladius, that you will also labor in prayer with us who have chosen to make such an effort. While the matter

1. Ps 84.7 (83.8 LXX). The Hebrew idiom present here may have the sense of "with great force," or "with greater and greater force."

2. Here Cyril is referring to his other work on the Pentateuch known as *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate.*

3. Or "seasonably," "opportunely."

we have undertaken is at least possible, it might even become a little easier still if Christ should make a wider path for us in this instance also. For he himself is the way, and he is the door,[4] and "in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."[5]

In carrying out the writing of this book we shall leave out some passages and will not go through every section in successive order (for, as I said just now, many of the matters that we have decided not to include here will be found treated more explicitly in the other composition). Those things, however, that would appear to be helpful for the purpose at hand we shall examine with as much precision and in as much detail as circumstances permit, and come straight to the truth,

Since the aim of this book is to bring one to the redemption that comes through Christ, it is absolutely essential to show that the human race was seriously endangered at the beginning and was brought to the brink of the utmost wretchedness. For the message[6] of divine help should come forth in this appropriate order, and not in any other way, for it says, "My strength is made perfect in weakness."[7] I believe that it is necessary with regard to the most knowledgeable and esteemed physicians, if they are going to be admired at all for those things in which they are learned, that the sick person respecting whom there occurred the demonstration of their innate skillfulness should have first been exhibited.

2. So then, we may now note that because famine was at that time pressing upon the people of Israel, afflicting and overwhelming them in an unbearable manner, they left the land of Canaan to go to Egypt, being around seventy-five persons, as is recorded.[8] As time passed, however, their race expanded into a multitude of a greater number, for it is written, *The people of Israel increased and multiplied, they became numerous and exceedingly*[9] *powerful, and the land multiplied them abundantly.*[10]

4. Cf. Jn 14.6; 10.7.
5. Col 2.3.
6. Or "ground," in the sense of "basis," "rationale."
7. 2 Cor 12.9.
8. Cf. Gn 46.27; Ex 1.5.
9. Var. omit "exceedingly."
10. Ex 1.7.

Now because the man to whose lot it fell to rule the country of the Egyptians became wary at the increase in the number of the Hebrews, he made plans against them, and *he set taskmasters over them, that they might ill-treat them in their labors.*[11] And the way in which they were ill-treated was through being made to labor hard at digging and at making many bricks, without any recompense. Also they were made to build strong cities for Pharaoh, that is, cities constructed with towers, or which were so wide and long as to seem totally impregnable to others,[12] evidently on account of the large number of people living in them. These cities were Pithom, Rameses, and others.

The scheming of the tyrant, however, turned out contrary to his hopes. For it says that in being abased those who were suffering injury evidenced the greater preeminence, and they became more numerous. This was because God is inclined to benefit those who experience maltreatment in such an ungodly way at the hands of the one whose wont is to harm them.

So the tyrant, perceiving this, came up with another plot to add to their troubles. He ordered the midwives of the Jews that, if they were delivering the babies of women who were already in the pangs of giving birth, [389] they should strangle those babies they saw to be of male gender, but to let a female live. For there seemed to be no reason to be concerned about those who were weak and disinclined to war, who were prone to fearfulness, and who by the law of nature had been made feeble. But the midwives did not carry out such an impious act, and on this account were pleasing to God. So what did that sinful man do? He gave vent to his wrath and persuaded the Egyptians to behave in a shameful and profane manner. For Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, *"Every male that is born to the Hebrews throw into the river, but let every female live."*[13]

3. The account that is being narrated may be paused at this point. And let us now, by way of bringing our minds into the deepest[14] contemplations, say that as the thinking of man

11. Ex 1.11.
12. Here "others" apparently means "other cities."
13. Ex 1.22.
14. Lit. "innermost."

is thoroughly devoted to evil from his youth through the lack of good things from above, the whole race, one might say, was corrupted upon the earth, and a manner of famine caused the heavenly teachings to be consumed.[15] We may surely also observe something just like this in the prodigal son, who is portrayed as a figure in a parable. He devoured the wealth received from his father in foreign parts, and desired to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating. In the same way, we hastened after the more earthly things, neglecting that which is better and the need to pursue those things that are more profitable, by means of which one could readily avoid missing out on the favor of heaven and be found richly blessed in one's relationship with God.

Therefore, since we had fallen away from everything that was able to maintain us in a state of well-being and of fellowship with God, we no longer deemed him who is both naturally and truly the Master to be our keeper. Rather, having given up the pious life in favor of the earth, as if it were holy, and having sunk down into the most shameful and unseemly life which to all intents and purposes lay in subjection to the devil, we have become like those who went down from Canaan into Egypt and came under the power of Pharaoh and the Egyptians. These latter, being devoted in an extraordinary manner to the worship of demons, and being well-suited to every form of vileness, also manifested in themselves, as in an image, Satan himself and those beings under him whom they considered gods. So they rejected the noblest sense of judgment and were afflicted by the mist and darkness that come from ignorance.

Since we were subject to a terrible and wicked master, namely Satan, we were worn out by the making of bricks and mortar, by which I mean things relating to the earth and the most abominable pursuits that are performed upon it, though not without great toil. For the diversions of this life, even though they may perhaps be activities that are without purpose, are not free from toil. Satan also appointed the unclean demons

15. Note that the Greek verbs translated as "was corrupted" and "be consumed" are imperfect. This verbal aspect denotes activity that is continual or habitual.

to be overseers, as it were, of the deeds done against those being wronged, because such matters are especially dear to him. These are the powers under his authority, which burden the minds of each of those upon the earth with diverse greedy passions, fearing, I suppose, that if they were in any way to allow the eye of the mind the space to turn towards God, they might set free the neck that is under Satan's yoke, for human nature is a great lover of freedom. And that [392] our meaningless diversions and our toiling in matters of the flesh, as well as our avid attention to things of a more earthly nature, are reckoned as glory and riches by the unclean demons[16] and by Satan himself is shown figuratively through the raising up of cities for Pharaoh by the people of Israel, who were being worn down through the making of bricks and mortar. This is seen too in the fact that Satan makes the male, that is, the one inclined towards manliness, especially as it pertains to virtue, to be abominated, and also, in effect, drowns the one who is fit for battle by lowering him into the muddy waters of pleasure. Yet he welcomes the one who is weak and who, being helpless and unable to resist, submits to the yoke. This indicates very clearly the fact that it says the male should be cast into the waters, while the female should be allowed to live. For those things which are visible and manifest are figures of those which are less visible.

Therefore, seeing that right back from the times of our forefathers we had become diseased with sin and afflicted by the lack of goodness, it would seem that we wretched ones became yoked against our will with Satan, the ruler of wickedness, and we suffered those malicious taskmasters, the unclean demons. Our condition was now at the final extremity of all evil, and there would have been nothing missing of those things which bring wretchedness and hardship, had not God shown mercy, saved us, and set us free. And in what manner this was, we will come to learn through the related matters that follow. For we will set forth the things written respecting the divine Moses as a picture and a pattern of the salvation which comes through Christ.

4. *There was a certain man from the tribe of Levi, who took one of*

16. Var. "spirits."

the daughters of Levi to be his wife. She conceived and gave birth to a male child. Seeing that he was fine-looking, they hid him for three months. When they could no longer hide him, his mother took a basket[17] *and coated it with bitumen and pitch. Then she put the child in it and placed it in the marshy ground beside the river. His sister watched from a distance to find out what would happen to him.*

Now Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, and her maids walked beside the river. When she saw the basket in the marshy ground, she sent her maid and brought it up. Opening it she saw the child crying in the basket. Pharaoh's daughter had pity on him, and said, "This is one of the Hebrew children." Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Do you want me to call a nurse for you from the Hebrews so she can nurse the child for you?" And she said, "Go."

The young girl went and called the child's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take care of this child for me and nurse him for me, and I will give you wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. When the child had grown up, she brought him in to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She gave him the name "Moses," saying, "I took him out of the water."[18]

As God the Father was merciful to those on earth, who were serving a profane tyrant and a most cruel brigand, he did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, as it is written.[19] For the Son, being in the same form [393] as God and equal to him, being of him and in him with respect to his nature, lowering himself into a state of emptiness, became one of us, and, as the wise evangelist John says, came to his own.[20] For, as he himself said in a certain passage, "I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,"[21] but his own did not receive him. Accordingly, he brought severe charges against them through the mouth of Isaiah, saying, "Hear, O heaven, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken. I have begotten sons and reared them, but they have rejected me. An ox knows its owner, and an ass its

17. The Greek noun *thibis* is derived from a transliteration of the Hebrew term for "ark" (*tēbâ*).

18. Ex 2.1–10. The name "Moses" resembles the Hebrew word for to "draw out" (*māšâ*).

19. Cf. Rom 8.32.

20. Cf. Jn 1.11.

21. Mt 15.24.

master's manger, but Israel does not know me, the people do not regard me."[22]

Since, therefore, the race of Israel stumbled and did not recognize the one who by nature was their true Master, those who worshiped idols[23] were summoned to faith, and the profane and most abominable multitude of those who denied God came to acknowledge the Redeemer. This is what was proclaimed earlier through the mouth of the prophets: "I set watchmen over you who said, 'Give heed to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not give heed.' Therefore, the nations gave heed, and those that tended their flocks. Hear, O earth! Behold, I am bringing disasters upon this people, the fruit of their rebellion, because they have not given heed to my word, and they have rejected my law."[24]

Note, therefore, that the mystery is plainly to be observed also in the matters regarding Moses, as I said just now. The divine Moses was of the tribe and bloodline of Levi. So too Emmanuel himself, being pure, guileless, and altogether holy,[25] was designated a high priest. This is so even though he is understood to be from the tribe of Judah, so that he might be believed to be also one worthy of praise and a king,[26] and that his holiness would not be of a fleshly kind, as was undoubtedly the case with the leaders of the Jews, but of God and of one who is king of all both in holiness and in glory.

There is, then, a figure in these fleshly matters, with the reality transcending the fleshly as a consequence. This reality is Christ, who, on account of the guilelessness of his deity, can be considered to be a newborn child, that is to say, he was a new creation.[27] For having put aside the state of growing old in corruption, we have been transferred into newness of life in him. So the baby was, as it were, a new creation. And that the

22. Is 1.2–3.

23. By this phrase and the ensuing "those who denied God," Cyril means the Gentiles.

24. Jer 6.17–19.

25. Cf. Heb 7.26.

26. Cyril is making a word-play on the name Judah, which means "praise." This is the tribe, of course, from which the kings of Judah originated.

27. Cf. 2 Cor 5.17.

newborn child is a symbol of guilelessness is also very easy to see, if one should care to adduce the words of the Savior. For on one occasion some young women desired to bring their infants that he might place his hands upon them, as it is written. But the disciples, thinking that a crowd was forming, kept them away. So Christ said to them, "Let the little children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."[28] Also, when there was once a dispute among the disciples about who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, the wise evangelist tells us this: "Taking a child, he stood him among them, and said, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as these little children, you shall by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.'"[29] What it means for us to be converted and to desire to become like children, [396] the blessed Paul makes clear when he writes, "Brothers, do not be children in your thinking; rather, be infants with regard to evil, but in your thinking be mature."[30] It is evident, then, that Christ is represented as an infant on account of the guilelessness of his deity.

Furthermore, in the way the sacred Scriptures are set out in the divine economy Moses's father is passed over in silence. For it was in fact possible to say, *So-and-so*[31] *took one of the daughters of Levi to be his wife,* yet it says, *a certain man*. This is because it indicates in an indirect manner that Christ was without a father according to the flesh, though there was the suspicion of a father, for he was thought to be the son of Joseph.[32]

Now it says that the child[33] was *fine-looking*. For Christ is described as being, and actually is, "more fair in beauty than the sons of men."[34] Also in another verse the divine David says regarding him, "Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one, in your beauty and in your comeliness."[35] One would not

28. Mt 19.13–14.
29. Mt 18.2–3; cf. Lk 9.47–48.
30. 1 Cor 14.20.
31. That is, Cyril states, a name could easily have been given in this place.
32. Cf. Lk 3.23.
33. Moses.
34. Ps 45.2 (44.3 LXX).
35. Ps 45.3 (44.4 LXX).

doubt that this beauty should be understood as lying in both the glory and the nature of the deity above all else. For one would not wish to confer upon Christ the glorious attributes of the flesh, and reckon them to be his glory. Far from it. For the whole mystery of the economy of his flesh exists in the emptying of himself and in his humility. In a certain place the prophet Isaiah writes concerning him, "And we saw him, yet he had no form or beauty. But his form was despicable, inferior to that of all the sons of men."[36] We are not saying that the word of the prophet denounces the glorious attributes of his deity, but rather it persuades us to understand that the things of the flesh, when compared to the glory of his deity, are seen to be worth nothing. The Son came in a form that was completely without comeliness. For though he was God in nature, he became one of us. Yet between these two is an immeasurable distance, and the human is incomparably inferior to God in its differences.

5. Note how, although Pharaoh had ordered that every male be included in his plot, the woman who gave birth to Moses hid him. Later she laid him down and enclosed him in a basket,[37] that is, in something that was covered, and then cast him into the marshy ground. Very soon, however, the daughter of the persecutor, finding the basket in the water, took it out, opened it, and found the infant crying. Understanding for sure that he was a Hebrew, she gave him back to the woman who had given him birth for her to feed him, promising her wages in return for the feedings.

What sort of meaning should we attribute to these words? Or what mystery is it necessary to observe here? Now before the coming of our Savior, the male was indeed subject to a plot upon the earth. Here we understand male to mean one with spiritual manliness, the fruits of which would be pleasing to God. Surely then, the male was in danger, because Satan was bringing down and drowning the male in worldly pleasures, as though in the mud and mire, the male being one who shuns weakness and womanly ways, with respect to character and manners that is.

For this reason, those inspired by the Spirit, who, I imag-

36. Is 53.2–3.
37. See n. 17 above.

ine, were astonished to see everyone becoming inclined to that which was improper, said, "They have all turned aside, they have become altogether useless; there is no one who does good, not even one."[38] For the whole of humankind were without any concern whatsoever for that which was good, because the [397] inventor of sin would not allow them to behave in a manly fashion.

Now when Emmanuel came to be with us, he was numbered among those subject to this plot. He was by nature the true male infant, that is, the one who did not know how to act in an unmanly fashion, for he did not show any weakness with respect to sin. At first he was unnoticed by the ruler of this age, for the child Moses was hidden. But when he grew older, the synagogue, which had given birth to him (for Christ had come from the Jews with regard to his flesh), being incited to murder by the designs of the devil, enclosed him in a tomb.

Of these things Moses was a clear figure, being laid down by the hand of his own mother in what was described as a basket, and who, moreover, was cast out.[39] For the synagogue of the Jews put Emmanuel at a distance from itself. But Pharaoh's daughter, that is, the church of the Gentiles, even though at one time it was her lot to have Satan as her father, found him at the side of the water, which may be interpreted as symbolizing the holy baptism through which and in which Christ is found, and she opened the basket. For the fact that he did not remain among the dead, but rather rose to life again, having trampled down death, and came out from the tomb, we have come to believe who through faith have found the one who experienced death on our account, that he might also obtain life for us.

Pharaoh's daughter found the child crying. We also light upon Christ, all but crying, as he relates the profanity of the Jews and the things that happened to him. For with great grief he says, "They pierced my hands and my feet, they counted all my bones. They watched and stared at me. They divided my garments among themselves, and cast lots for my clothing."[40]

38. Ps 14.3 (13.3 LXX).
39. Or "exposed."
40. Ps 22.16–18 (21.17–19 LXX).

And in another passage he says, "They gave me gall for my food, and gave me vinegar to drink for my thirst."[41]

That Christ came from the Jews, the church of the Gentiles recognized and believed, for Pharaoh's daughter said, *"This is one of the Hebrew children."* That, however, the synagogue of the Jews will eventually receive Christ from the Gentile church, and be initiated into the mystery relating to him, is readily shown by the fact that the one who gave birth to the child received him from the daughter of Pharaoh. For, while it was as though the synagogue of the Jews had put Jesus outside, casting him off in her disobedience, in the end times she will receive him, and be initiated into the mystery through the words[42] of the church. And that this will not be an unprofitable matter, the synagogue herself is encouraged to believe with much hope. For observe how Pharaoh's daughter promised payment to the mother of Moses, who chose to take care of the child that came from her.

The birth of Moses, therefore, and those things relating to him would signify very clearly to those who are of sound mind the mystery of Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, now and always and to the unending ages.[43] Amen.

More concerning Moses

6. Having examined the birth of Moses we have, as we are able, shown plainly the mystery of Christ. The limited understanding given describes him with regard to the economy of the Incarnation [400] as a newborn babe on account of the guilelessness of his deity, his total incorruptibility, and complete integrity. This is also to say that a new creation came into being.

But now let us also explore another way in which Emmanuel is given form in Moses. For Christ is the end of the law[44] and the prophets.[45]

41. Ps 69.21 (68.22 LXX).
42. Lit. "voices."
43. Var. omit "now and always and to the unending ages."
44. Cf. Rom 10.4.
45. Var. add "and every kind of inspired Scripture points him out to us."

Now it says, *It came about after much time had passed that Moses, having grown up, went out to his kinsmen, the people of Israel. Noting their suffering, he saw an Egyptian striking one of his Hebrew kinsmen.*[46] *So he smote the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.*

Going out on the next day, he saw two Hebrew men fighting. He said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your neighbor?" But the man said, "Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" Then Moses was afraid, and thought, "If this is how it is, the matter has become known."

Pharaoh heard about this, and sought to kill Moses. So Moses departed from the presence of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian. And when he came into the land of Midian, he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, who looked after the sheep of Jethro their father.[47] *They came and drew water until they had filled the troughs, so that they could water the sheep of Jethro their father. But some shepherds came and drove them away. So Moses got up and came to their rescue. He drew water for them, and watered their sheep.*

The girls came to Reuel their father. He said to them, "Why have you come back so soon today?" They said, "An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds, and drew water for us and watered our sheep." Then he said to his daughters, "So where is he? Why have you left the man behind? Invite him for something to eat."

Moses stayed with the man, and he gave Zipporah his daughter to Moses as a wife. The woman conceived and gave birth to a son. Moses called his name Gershom,[48] *saying, "I am a sojourner in a foreign land."*[49]

Such are the matters concerning Moses. Our discourse will again consist of a contemplation of the inner meaning, while ascribing to the literal sense what is particularly appropriate to it. And whatever appears to be especially able to aid our spiritual explanations, this our discourse will bring around to the subject of the economy concerning Christ.

46. Var. add "of the people of Israel. Looking this way and that, he saw no one" (following Ex 2.11–12).

47. The Hebrew Masoretic text lacks "Jethro" in this sentence and the following, not using this name until Ex 3.1.

48. In Hebrew the name Gershom appears to mean "a sojourner there."

49. Ex 2.11–22.

7. We learned that when Moses had grown up, he *went out to his kinsmen*. Now the divine Paul is indeed correct when he writes, "When the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law."[50] It is necessary, then, to understand how the manner of the sending indicated here should be suitably interpreted and what is meant by going out. For when the Word from God the Father became one of us, that is, a human being, should we not allow that he, in effect, *went out?* And shall we not say it to be true that he came to be outside of the glory befitting God [401], for although he was rich he became poor,[51] and brought himself down through emptying himself? And so, when the divine economy was eventually completed, and when he was about to return to the Father to take his seat with him, and to ascend the highest of thrones, he said, "Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with you before the world was."[52]

Yet the Lord of heaven and earth, who as God was essentially attributed with power over all, when he took on the form of a servant did not in any way leave behind what was his own. And he, "in whom we live and move and have our being,"[53] though he was seen naked among us and among the tombs, and though he came back to life again as the one who is life, could not be thought, even for a moment, to have separated himself from what especially befits him. How could one doubt this? He went out then to his kinsmen, that is, to the people of Israel, for theirs were the promises, theirs were the fathers to whom the promises had been made. For this reason he said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."[54] As, however, they were suffering terrible and truly grievous oppression (for Satan was attacking them so as to crush them), he looked to set them free and deliver them from all hardship. Having in a way killed the one who wished to do them wrong, he hid him in the ground, that is, he placed him in those parts under the earth,

50. Gal 4.4.
51. Cf. 2 Cor 8.9.
52. Jn 17.5.
53. Acts 17.28.
54. Mt 15.24.

shutting him up in Hades. This, I say, is the meaning of hiding the dead Egyptian in the sand. That the mass of unclean and God-hating[55] demons were driven together into Hades by the ineffable power of our Savior, and were condemned to dwell in the abyss, one might very readily learn from the gospel readings. "For the demons," it says, "begged him not to order them to depart into the abyss."[56] As a great multitude of them had already been sent there beforehand, those that remained came to him and begged him that they might be spared from being condemned along with those others. That they were being tormented in that they were suffering punishment for their cruelty towards us, one may readily see, if one cares to, when we hear them crying out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to torment us before the time?"[57]

So then, since Christ beheld the Egyptian oppressing those upon the earth, which was intolerable, he hid him in Hades. Joshua, who became the leader after Moses and brought the people of Israel across the Jordan, also enacted the same thing by way of shadows and types when he shut up the five kings of the Amorites in a cave.[58] The type indirectly foreshows to us that, after life under the law, Emmanuel, having been declared king over us, would seal up the leaders of the demons, just as if in a deep cave in the remotest recesses under the earth.

Now when he who was oppressing and afflicting had been done away with, on the next day, it says, as two Hebrews were fighting, Moses stood in the middle as an arbitrator and mediator of peace for those who opposed each other in an unfriendly manner. He showed himself hostile to the one who wished to beat up his fellow Hebrew, and said to him, *"Why are you hitting your neighbor?"* But that man said to him, *"Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill* [404] *me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?"* For when Emmanuel had shut up Satan in Hades, he showed himself to the people of Israel as an arbitrator of righteousness and a teacher of mutual affection, instruct-

55. Or "demons hated by God."
56. Lk 8.31.
57. Mt 8.29; Lk 4.34.
58. Cf. Jos 10.17–19.

ing them to seek after the close bonds of love, and to regard nothing as better than peace and harmony. For this reason, he also said, "My peace I give you."[59] But they, although they ought to have commended what he was proposing, and to have admired the mediator, the provider of peace, and the lord of love, who was holding forth the most noble of teachings, they treated him with immeasurable ungodliness. For they did not consider him their leader, even though the voice of the psalmist clearly said, "I have been appointed king by him upon Zion, his holy hill."[60] Rather, going beyond all manner of shamelessness, they opposed him in a harsh and impious manner, saying at one time, "Who gave you this authority?"[61] and at another, "We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he is from."[62] Also, the things by means of which they were being saved, they marked down as a cause for accusation, and they most foolishly disparaged the manner of help that was being offered.

The divine Moses was accused of slaying the Egyptian, even though he had been afflicting and oppressing the multitude of the Hebrews, and wearying them through unbearably harsh treatment. So Christ, having buried the evil demons in the abyss, and having removed them against their will from their dominion over us by sending them out from their hosts, even though he ought to have been admired for this, did not escape the words of those whose habit it was to reproach others. For, by taking the working of miracles as a cause of accusation, they dared to say, "This man does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul, the ruler of demons."[63]

Note that Moses, looking this way and that, and seeing no one, hid the dead Egyptian in the sand. Then, as he departed, he counseled the kinsmen of his race to seek peace. For the Lord makes war against Amalek, but with a hidden hand, as

59. Jn 14.27.
60. Ps 2.6.
61. Mt 21.23.
62. Jn 9.29.
63. Mt 12.24.

it is written;[64] and without any of those upon the earth seeing, the most secret things have been administered through Christ. For how or when the hordes of demons were condemned and ordered to dwell in the abyss, who upon the earth could know?

So then, having driven Satan into Hades, and having delivered those upon the earth from his harsh treatment, Christ called them to the knowledge of virtue. He himself says this very clearly in a certain passage: "Or how can one enter the house of the strong man and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man, and then he may plunder his house?"[65] For Christ, having first bound the strong man, which is Satan, through their faith transfers his goods to himself, that is, those who were formerly acting under Satan's direction and were accounted worthless.

As, however, Christ was impiously mocked over those things for which it was reasonable and proper for him to be marveled at, he necessarily removed himself. So he left Judea, where he had been born according to the flesh, though in reality, as the Word, he was not a Jew, but was [405] from heaven above, from the Father. In just the same way, the divine Moses was born in Egypt, a Hebrew of Hebrews, having a noble and holy root in his father. Yet, since those of his own race reproached him, being extremely slanderous of the things he had done for them, he finally departed for Midian and came to settle in the land of foreigners. Then, when he had sat down by the well, he lent his assistance to the daughters of Jethro, who were seven in number, and who, while tending their father's flocks, brought the thirsty animals to the watering troughs. And although they had already drawn water with a good deal of effort, some of the goat herders got the better of them. But Moses contended with them and overcame them, and drawing water with his own hands, he watered their sheep, as it is written.

We should, then, take Jethro, who was priest of the Midianites, as standing for this world. He was not serving[66] him who is

64. Ex 17.16 LXX reads, "with a secret hand the Lord wages war upon Amalek to all generations."

65. Mt 12.29.

66. Or "worshiping."

truly God in nature, but rather those things created by the Creator and Maker, or objects made out of stone, the skilled work of craftsmen. For the world has fallen into deception, worshiping demons and not God. Now the name Jethro is to be understood as meaning "excess" or "superfluous."[67] And such is the world, which is altogether superfluous. For those who choose to mind the things of the world surely fail to accomplish anything that is needful, but rather they become intoxicated with vain distractions and they plunge themselves, as it were, into useless pleasures. It cannot be doubted that for those who wish to live correctly the things of the flesh are superfluous, and to fix one's mind on the things in the world makes one fail to pursue that which is useful and necessary, as it is truly the case that "the mind of the flesh is hostile toward God,"[68] and the one who sets his mind on the things of the world "makes himself an enemy of God."[69] Therefore, to choose to mind worldly things is truly superfluous, and the world itself is superfluous. For in a certain passage Christ said, "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"[70]

8. Moses, then, removed himself from the land of the Egyptians to go to Midian in the same way that Christ went from Judea into Galilee.

And note that the daughter of Levi who gave birth to sacred Moses was one, while the daughters of Jethro the Midianite were more, namely seven, in number. For one is the multitude of the Jews from which Jesus was born according to the flesh, which is found in a figure with respect to Moses. The many, however, are the daughters of the world, namely the masses of the Gentiles who are found to dwell in it. So after Christ had left the synagogue from which he had been born according to the flesh, he turned to the numerous masses of the Gentiles, who were oppressed by wicked shepherds, that is, the rulers of this world, and he saved them.

67. This is a reasonable explanation of the Hebrew form of the name.
68. Rom 8.7.
69. Jas 4.4.
70. Mt 16.26.

To the manner of the oppression, however, let us now add a discussion of the manner of the help given. It is customary of divine Scripture to compare our innate knowledge of God, by which we are led in every action, to a cistern of water within us. For the knowledge of everything that is good and the comprehension of the glory of God, albeit dimly as in a mirror,[71] flows forth as though from a fountain in our mind. [408] Therefore, God brought accusations against those who did not care to love him, and who were profanely inclined to fix their devotion upon demons, and he said through the mouth of Jeremiah, "Heaven was astounded at this, and the earth trembled exceedingly, says the Lord. For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and they have dug for themselves broken cisterns, which will not be able to hold water."[72] False worship is like a broken cistern, for one could not draw from it the word which has the power to give life, but the perfect knowledge of God is truly a fountain of life.

The cistern, then, would be a picture of our innate knowledge. Now, so long as we have used our mind for the right knowledge of God, which is unforced, we shall arrive directly at the truth. But if someone, who by the deceit of demons is trying to get the better of us, should turn our minds towards his opinions, he would be using his efforts for those demons. This, I believe, is the figurative meaning of Jethro's daughters drawing water, while those who wished to take advantage of them sought to take it by force. We say that those who have been deceived are to be found in such sort of infirmities, as their innate knowledge is inclined towards that which has no beauty, that is, towards error and what is of use to demons. But Christ came to give help, for he frightened off the sinful false shepherds and gave us the living water to drink, which is his divine and heavenly preaching. He therefore said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink."[73]

Let us take Jethro, then, as representing the world, which is filled with excess and vanity. The seven daughters we say are

71. Cf. 1 Cor 13.12.
72. Jer 2.13.
73. Jn 7.37.

the masses of the nations all over, each of Jethro's daughters signifying a multitude. The evil and extremely violent shepherds may be reasonably understood as the hordes of demons. And the one who comes to our aid is Christ, who makes us drink abundantly from the divine springs.

When the girls had escaped the harsh treatment of the profane shepherds, they went back home to their father Reuel, which is to say, Jethro. And when he asked them the reason why they had come back earlier than usual, they straightaway told him how Moses had helped them. He immediately welcomed the man into his home, and gave him Zipporah as a wife, the most prominent and most comely of his daughters, and she gave birth to Gershom. For when Christ helped the mass of nations in the world, it became known to them that, since those of them who had been instructed in the mysteries had been saved through him, he was able both to come to their aid and to deliver them readily from the hand of those who wished to do them harm.

Furthermore, he is pleased to join himself to them, as Reuel did with the most sacred Moses. This happened by way of a marital union, when he presented to him as a most comely bride the church of the Gentiles, which is what is to be understood by Zipporah. For the name means "visitation" or "beautiful," and also "free gift of breath."[74] For the rising sun from on high visited her who was [409] truly preeminent and beautiful, namely the church, and freely gave her the heavenly gift of his own breath, by which is meant the partaking of the Holy Spirit. And for him she gave birth to Gershom, meaning the people who are truly sojourners. For those who have been sealed by the divine Spirit, who are deemed worthy of visitation from above, and who have been fashioned according to the beauty of the Son, are indeed sojourners in this world. And it would be especially fitting for them to cry out and say, "Here we have no lasting city, but we look for the one that is to come, of which the designer and builder is God."[75] For although they walk upon the earth, they live as citizens of heaven, and do not in the least

74. Zipporah in Hebrew in fact means "bird."
75. Heb 13.14; 11.10.

strive after those things that are in this world, but earnestly lay claim to the things of the age to come. For they know how, through a truly refined and well-rounded life, they are to follow Christ, who on our account and as one of us lived as a sojourner in this world. For he took no thought for the things of this world, far from it, but rather he exhibited to us the pattern of an upright life that transcends this world.

Observe how the sacred Scripture, very suitably to the divine economy, named the father of the seven girls Jethro before Moses came to their aid, but after that Reuel. Jethro means "excess," that is to say, "superfluous," just as I said above, while Reuel means "shepherding of God."[76] I will make use of this word because it is helpful. We said that we assign to this man the role of representing the world, for the distractions that are in the world are truly superfluous and vain. Now the group of young women was in such a predicament before they were helped by Christ. But once they had been rescued from mistreatment and put beyond the reach of the profane shepherds, then the man was renamed Reuel, the "flock of God" or the "shepherding of God," according to how the import of the word is to be interpreted. For he placed himself under the care of the chief shepherd of all, who is Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the vision of Moses in the bush

The blessed prophets, inasmuch as they were men moved by the Spirit, gave considerable attention to those things pertaining to ourselves, and undertook a precise examination of such matters. They exhorted that the Word of God should be held forth to those upon the earth as a helper and assistant, ascribing to him alone the ability, in that he was God, to save those who had reached the extremity of evils. For the prophets were instructors in the most noble of things, and were wise and prudent in showing forth the way of salvation. And as they did not

76. This is a possible meaning of the name.

lack any of those things that are to be commended, were they not rightfully admired?

Nevertheless, it was not for these men to drive off Satan, who exercised tyranny over us. Nor was it theirs to drive away the profane hordes of demons who in many different ways were plundering us wretched ones, and who were making us in effect like those conquered by the spear, and who, by weighing us down with a yoke of slavery, impiously compelled us to think and to do what seemed good to them. Like terrible and unrelenting exactors of tribute, they demanded that we set before them things for their service, and as if we were like those under obligation, they ordered us to defile ourselves with earthly pursuits, and therefore to give thought only for fleshly concerns.

So then, [412] it was the glorious accomplishment of the ineffable Being to shake off the proud and profane cruelty of the devil, and to deliver those on the earth from the most noxious and hateful slavery, and to show them henceforth to be workers of virtue. And through the sacred Scriptures we know for certain that this would eventually be that very great and much-desired good for those upon the earth, when the Only-Begotten came down, emptying himself and becoming a man.

Now the text reads as follows: *In those days, after some time, the king of Egypt died; and the children of Israel groaned because of their labors, and they cried out, and their cry because of their labors went up to God. And God heard their groaning, and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God looked upon the children of Israel and was made known to them.*[77] The Egyptians indeed oppressed the people of Israel, casting upon them the yoke of compulsory servitude, and placing over them harsh and merciless taskmasters who made their life grievous, as it is written.[78] Those wretched ones who were distressed by such harsh treatment, in crying out and lamenting, earnestly entreated that they should be found worthy to receive mercy from above. And God visited them, and, it says, *he looked upon the children of Israel and was made known to them.*

So when we are ignorant of God, then we will also become

77. Ex 2.23–25.
78. Cf. Ex 1.11.

subject to those who would do us harm. We roll ourselves in the mire of sin, with the unclean demons as harsh and cruel masters over such a state of affairs. Yet when God is known, the grace of liberty will always follow.

These events, however, were enacted with a figurative meaning, and were recorded for our admonition, as it is written.[79] And the figure is related to that one nation of the race of Israel. It very plainly teaches us that the purpose of the devil and the unclean spirits is to compel forcefully those upon the earth to toil over vain pursuits and to perform works of the flesh, lest, having a mind that is at leisure and able to look to heavenly things, they should come to know the God of all. For in doing this they would also be directed to what is pleasing to him and be inclined to submit to the yoke of his service.

Now as there exists within human nature the love of freedom, there are times when we do not approve of the passions, and often, during those brief moments of sanity, we loathe the disagreeable nature of fleshly pleasures. We long for God's help from above, and we cry out endlessly against the unwilling servitude. This, in my opinion, is the groaning to God of the children of Israel.

So as God is good, he sent the Son from heaven as our Savior and Redeemer, who became like us, that is, a man. And once again the sacred Scripture foreshowed this matter to us in a figure, for it reads as follows: *Now Moses was tending the sheep of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the sheep into the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush, and he saw that the bush* [413] *was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. Moses said, "I will go near and see this great sight, why the bush is not consumed." When the Lord saw that he was coming near to look, the Lord called him from the bush, saying, "Moses, Moses." And he said, "What is it?" He said, "Do not come near. Remove your sandals from your feet, because the place where you are standing is holy ground." And he said to him, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses turned his face away, for he was afraid to look upon God.*[80]

79. Cf. 1 Cor 10.11.
80. Ex 3.1–6.

According to the words of the prophet, God gave the law to be our help, for with respect to the divine economy he showed forth in advance that Moses was a tutor.[81] He established the shadow to be a means, in effect, of manifesting more perfect things, while the reality would appear in its own time. And with the mystery of Christ, which is what was expressly being taught through this vision, the period of the tutor came to an end. For the bush was a plant having the form of a shrub that was without fruit, and because of its thorns there was room for little else. And it was encompassed in flame, for a holy angel in the form of fire was within it.[82] The flame rose up high, yet it did absolutely no harm to the bush in which it appeared. What was happening was truly wonderful and beyond all words. The fire existed together with the thorns and encompassed the bush with the gentlest embrace, to all intents and purposes neglecting its own innate power, and resided within that which could quite readily have been destroyed by it.

The divine Moses therefore lowered his face. What was the reason for this? The sacred Scripture compares the divine nature[83] to fire, because it is all-powerful and is easily able to overcome everything, while it compares humans upon the earth to trees and grass in the field. Accordingly, it says, "Our God is a consuming fire,"[84] and also, "As for man, his days are like grass; like the flower of the field, so he flourishes."[85]

Now just as fire cannot be endured by thorns, so also deity cannot be endured by humanity. Yet in Christ it happened that the deity became endurable. For "in him all the fullness of deity dwelt bodily," as the wise Paul testified.[86] The one who dwells in unapproachable light,[87] namely God, took up his residence in the temple that came forth from the Virgin. He lowered himself into a state of gentleness that was to be marveled at, as if he were restraining the absolute force of his own nature,

81. Cf. Gal 3.24.
82. Or, "occupied it."
83. Or "Being."
84. Dt 4.24; Heb 12.29.
85. Ps 103.15 (102.15 LXX).
86. Col 2.9.
87. 1 Tm 6.16.

so that he might be circumscribed, just as the fire did in fact restrain itself with the thorns.

So the fire in the bush, which kept the wood completely unharmed, indicates in a figure that what had become perishable[88] in its nature, that is, the flesh, Christ rendered more excellent than its perishable state. Since the Word of God was by nature life, how can one doubt that he imparted life to his own temple, and rendered it imperishable and stronger than death?

The fire, then, spared the thorns, and to the puny and extremely feeble wood the flame became endurable. For, as I said, deity was circumscribed in humanity. This is the mystery that came to be in Christ. The Word of God came to dwell among us, not seeking retribution, [416] nor inflicting punishment, but encompassing us in the most kind and gentle embrace. For as he himself said in a certain place, "God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him."[89]

So then, although the flame enveloped it, the bush was not consumed. Likewise we were not punished for the sins we had committed, as I just said, but rather Christ encompassed us in light through the Holy Spirit, and through the Spirit he is within us, and in him we cry, "Abba, Father."[90]

Having lowered his face, the blessed Moses continued by saying, *"I will go near and see this great sight, why the bush is not consumed."* But the blessed angel kept him away from the presence of God, and immediately said, *"Do not come near. Remove the sandals from your feet, because the place where you are standing is holy ground."* He calls the place where the bush was, the waterless desert which brings forth thorns, *"holy ground."* So every place where Christ may be is holy. And he does indeed very much appear in the desert, a figure for the church of the Gentiles, to which the sacred word says, "Rejoice, O thirsty desert; let the wilderness be glad, and may it blossom forth like the lily."[91] Also in a certain passage God promised that he would make the des-

88. Or "corrupted."
89. Jn 3.17. It is not evident that Christ spoke these words himself.
90. Cf. Rom 8.15.
91. Is 35.1.

ert into watery ground, and the thirsty land into watercourses.[92] For the grace of the Savior has abounded towards us who have been called out of the nations, and like some river overflowing with streams of heavenly water it gives us an abundance to drink. This is what the divine David says to us: "He turned rivers into a desert, and a fruitful land into a salty wasteland, because of the evildoing of those who dwell in it."[93] So then, the bush was in the desert, and the ground that contained it was holy and sacred to God.

Now as Moses was approaching the bush, he was stopped and ordered to remove the sandals from his feet. This matter symbolizes death and corruption, since every sandal is the remains of a living creature that has died and suffered corruption. So for those under the law and under the ministration of its tutorship, Christ is unapproachable. It is necessary, then, first to wash away the defilement and scrub off the dirt of sin. Yet it is impossible for the blood of bulls to take away sin.[94] For no one is justified by the law. But where sin has not yet been eradicated, corruption needs must prevail and death still have power over those who are defiled.

Therefore, whoever desires to see the mystery of Christ must lay aside the ministration existing in types and shadows, which has mastery over neither corruption nor sin. Then he will come to understand and will enter into the holy ground, which is the church. Now the fact that those who do not turn away from the ministration according to the law are under the power of corruption, Christ himself explains when he says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you."[95]

So this was the mystery, which was not found anywhere among those under the law, but among those who have accepted the faith, who are justified in Christ, and who have been enriched through the teaching that is better than that of the law, that is to say, gospel teaching. Those [417], then, who have

92. Cf. Is 41.18.
93. Ps 107.33–34 (106.33–34 LXX).
94. Cf. Heb 10.4.
95. Jn 6.53.

not yet been relieved of their burden through coming to faith are under the power of corruption, and by reason of the law are under the dominion of the source[96] of death, namely sin. Such are far from Christ. But if they would wish to loosen their sandals, that is to say, to remove the state of corruption, which is powerless to bring about justification, and if they would wish to draw near to the grace which truly gives life, then they will draw near to him who justifies the ungodly, which is Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

96. Lit. "mother."

BOOK NINE: EXODUS, PART 2

Concerning the sacrifice of the lamb

THAT IT IS by Christ alone that we escape the power of death—as the wise disciple described to us when he said, "There is no name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved"[1]—one may learn, if one cares to, by numerous different means. For in the inspired Scripture many thousands of wonderful and manifest images brightly reflect the power of the mystery. So in what follows we shall now gather and make known what is useful for this purpose.

Moses and Aaron came before Pharaoh and expressly stated, *"Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Let my people go that they may celebrate a feast to me in the wilderness." Pharaoh said, "And who is he that I should obey his voice by letting the people of Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and I will not let Israel go." They said to him, "The God of the Hebrews has called us. We shall therefore go a three-day journey*[2] *so that we may sacrifice to our God; otherwise, death or violence will come upon us." Then the king of Egypt said to them, "Why, Moses and Aaron, do you turn my people aside from their work? Each of you, get back to your work."*[3]

The witless Pharaoh, filled with a devilish insanity, said he did not know who the God of the Hebrews was. When, however, the country of the Egyptians was devastated by great and grievous plagues and was soon brought to ruin, when the waters were turned into blood, and locusts and hail were brought

1. Acts 4.12. Cyril's wording is inexact.
2. Var. add "into the desert"; as Ex 5.3.
3. Ex 5.1–4.

upon the land, when gnats and frogs infested it, and darkness fell upon it for three days, he only then promised to release them, though not willingly. But Pharaoh was stubborn, and afterwards he again became malevolent and hardened, and so it was altogether unthinkable for him to choose to release Israel from such a long servitude.

Then God visited punishment upon the firstborn of the Egyptians, and let loose the Destroyer against them. But as it was [420] necessary that those chosen in love on account of their forefathers[4] should not perish along with that ungodly people, God instituted a type in the law of the Passover, and he gave special instructions that the mystery of the wrath of Christ should be enacted ahead of time. It can also be understood from this how it is impossible that death should be abolished through Moses or the law. Rather it is the precious blood of Christ that turns the Destroyer aside and delivers from destruction those who have been consecrated, for he is life from life, and the God of all, as he is God of God.

This, then, is what the sacred Scripture states: *And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month is to be the beginning of your months; it is the first of the months of the year for you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel and say, 'On the tenth day of this month let each man take a lamb, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household. If those in the house are few, so that they are not enough for the lamb, the neighbor who lives next to him shall partake with them.'"*[5]

Having prescribed the need to take a lamb, he then gives further instructions about what kind of sacrificial animal would be suitable, and when and how the rite had to be performed. *"Your lamb,"* it says, *"shall be perfect and without blemish, one year old,*[6] *and you shall take it from the lambs or the kids. It shall be kept with you until the fourteenth day of this month; and the whole multitude of the congregation of the people of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight.*[7] *They shall*

4. Var. "necessary that Israel, those chosen in love on account of their forefathers to be enrolled for a share in those things being contemplated . . ."

5. Ex 12.1–4.

6. Cyril omits from the citation the fact that the lamb was also to be a "male." He mentions it later; see p. 36 below.

7. Lit. "towards the evening."

take some of the blood and put it upon the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat them. That night they shall eat the flesh roasted in fire, and they shall eat unleavened bread with bitter herbs. You shall not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted in fire, the head with the legs and the entrails. Do not leave any of it until the morning, and do not break any of its bones. Whatever remains of it until the morning you shall burn with fire."[8]

To these matters the Lawgiver then adds more, explaining what kind of dress was appropriate for the participants, and what manner should accompany those who had prepared themselves to participate in this most sacred communal feast. For it says, *"Thus you shall eat it: let your loins be girded, let your shoes be on your feet, and your staffs in your hands; and you shall eat it with haste, for it is the Lord's Passover."*[9]

The way in which the slaying of the lamb would benefit the people of Israel is very clearly revealed: *"And I will pass through the land of Egypt, and I will strike every firstborn, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of the Egyptians I will execute judgment. I am the Lord. And the blood will be a sign for you upon the houses where you are. I will see the blood and I will protect you, and there will not be any plague upon you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt."*[10]

Then after other things it also says, *"For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and from the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses."*[11] Having prescribed the punishment of one who transgresses this command, it further says, *"And the first day shall be called holy, and the seventh day shall be a holy convocation for you."*[12]

This, then, is what the divine word contains. So going through it again bit by bit, [421] we shall endeavor to assign a suitable interpretation to each part, bringing forth from what is variously indicated the import in relation to Christ himself.

2. Now the time of this ritual is defined as being at the beginning of the year, in the first month. So Christ is the begin-

8. Ex 12.5–10.
9. Ex 12.11.
10. Ex 12.12–13.
11. Ex 12.15.
12. Ex 12.16.

ning of all things,[13] for he is not of recent origin on account of his generation from God the Father before the ages. And as the festival was in the month of new growth,[14] he himself sanctifies throughout all time, from the beginning until the end. For indeed "the old things have passed away," in accordance with the words of the blessed Paul, "behold, all things have become new."[15] So too in Christ, human nature was restored to how it was in the beginning.

These instructions were enjoined upon the people of Israel while they were still slaves, acting under tyrannical power, for they were still held by the Egyptians. The text is also a figurative representation[16] that in no other way can the soul of man escape sin to become free, nor flee the oppression of the devil and be removed from the way of life in the world to enter the heavenly city, except through the fellowship and benevolence of Christ. So it was said by him to the senseless Jews: "Truly, truly, I say to you, that everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. The slave does not remain in the house for ever; the son does remain for ever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."[17] And again: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you."[18] Of this life the promised land, to which they hastened after leaving Egypt, may suitably be interpreted as a figure.

Now the lamb was taken on the tenth day of the month and kept until the fourteenth day, so that it might be slain at twilight. And, one might perhaps ask, why was this so? The reason is actually a profound one. For tell me why it is that he forbade the lamb to be taken on the first day of the month. And what induced God to legislate that the victim should be kept for five days and that the ritual be performed at twilight? For we find that the number of days beginning from the tenth[19] was five.

13. Var. add "and is at the beginning of all things."

14. Cf. Ex 13.4 LXX. The Hebrew says "in the month of Abib." The name "Abib" seems to have connotations of "new growth" or "freshness."

15. 2 Cor 5.17.

16. Var. add "to us."

17. Jn 8.34–36.

18. Jn 6.53.

19. Var. add "and continuing until the fourteenth." Cyril's computation of the number of the days is, of course, inclusive.

So then, that the lamb was not taken on the first day of the month but on the tenth seems to indicate that a long period of time had gone before, and that there were certain long ages before ours, throughout which God always was, and is, and shall be. Then this next age, which is ours, comes in immediately afterwards, as though by way of a five-day period as just stated, being an age divided into five periods of time. This matter being discussed is explained to us especially well by the Savior's parable in this manner: "The kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. Having agreed with the laborers on a denarius for the day's work, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out around the third hour, he saw others in the market place standing idle, and also to those he said, 'You too go into my vineyard, and whatever is fair I will give you.' So they went. Then again [424] around the sixth and ninth hours he did the same. When he went out around the eleventh hour, he found others standing there, and said to them, 'Why have you stood here idle the whole day?' They said to him, 'Nobody has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into my vineyard.'"[20]

Can you see here most plainly and distinctly all the five times into which our age is divided? The first we reckon to be the time when our ancestor Adam was still in paradise. After that the second was seen as being like "the third hour," during which there were Noah and those with him. The third was like "the sixth hour," in which the God of all called Abraham to a knowledge of the truth. The fourth was like "the ninth hour," namely the time of Moses and the prophets. "Around the eleventh hour," that is, the fifth time, was when the day was drawing to a close, which was like Christ bringing to an end the age that then was and when he hired the Gentiles who were called to a knowledge not had by any other in the times that had passed before then. Therefore, more so than all others, those who came last could say, "Nobody has hired us."

So then, the lamb was taken on the first day of a five-day period, being the tenth day of the month, which was a figure of the beginning of the age. It was kept until the end of the time

20. Mt 20.1–7.

period, namely the fourteenth day, when it was slain at twilight. This was so that you might further understand how the mystery of Christ is neither something new nor something recent, but it was held in the foreknowledge of the Father, even from the very foundation of the world. So Christ died for us in the latter times of the world, when the spiritual, divine light was not yet shining, when the earth was still submerged in the darkness of ignorance, and when the powers of this dark world were polluting[21] the hearts of all with their deceits. Therefore, when he was among us, the Savior said, "I am the light of the world."[22] The saints too are called lights in the world, since they hold fast to the word of life.[23] So it also says to those who truly give heed, "you are the light of the world,"[24] on account of their being able to shine forth in the darkness.

You will also be amazed when you discover there to be another mystical aspect of the divine economy in this matter. For the lamb is slain on the fourteenth day of the month, when the cycle of the moon reaches the full extent of its glory. Though it illuminates the world, as it were, with a counterfeit form of light, it nevertheless soon begins to decline, and the dignity and beauty that it possesses of necessity then diminish. You may here understand, being led by the figure and shadow that this matter presents to an apprehension of the most true things, that the ruler of the night, namely the devil, depicted in a figure by means of the moon (for the moon was appointed to rule the night),[25] was glorified throughout all the world and, having put the wisdom of the world as a counterfeit light into the hearts of those who were being deceived, [425] he exerted the fullest degree of his glory. Then Christ, the true Lamb that takes away the sin of the world, died on our account and for our sake, and brought the glory of the devil to an end. For it was necessary that it should soon cease and be expended, that the multitude of the nations should then be urged to rise up to

21. Var. "darkening."
22. Jn 8.12.
23. Cf. Phil 2.15–16.
24. Mt 5.14.
25. Cf. Gn 1.16.

enjoy peace and love toward God through conversion and faith. And this is what was sung long ago in the Psalms concerning Christ: "In his days righteousness will dawn,[26] and abundance of peace until the moon be done away with."[27] For righteousness dawned in the days of Christ through faith, and an abundance of peace through turning to God. Together with this, the ruler of the night, the devil, was also done away with. But note how it does not simply say that the moon was done away with, but rather that it is done away with *in return*. For as the devil first did away with man, it is surely wholly evident that the devil was then done away with in return.[28]

So *"let each man take a lamb,"* it says, *"according to their households."* For a complete[29] Christ dwells in each one through their partaking of the Holy Spirit, and he is not divided, as Paul states.[30] Yet, it says, if there are too few so as not to be enough for a lamb, their neighbors who live near them will assist them. For those not having in themselves alone the ability to understand the complete mystery of Christ, or who are not sufficient to comprehend him on account of the weakness of their minds, these will also partake, having those of the same faith as fellow-workers and helpers. Through admonishing one another from time to time we are able to ascend to greater contemplations. So that wise eunuch, for instance, inquired of Philip when he heard the prophecy about Christ, saying, "Please tell me whom the prophet is talking about. Is it himself or someone else?"[31] You see how, in receiving the help of a neighbor (for all of us who hold to the one common word of faith are near to one another), through his inquiry he was then shown to be a partaker of the spiritual lamb. For he was also worthy to be baptized immediately, and he was indeed so baptized.

Now it says, *"Let the lamb be perfect,"* for in Christ there were

26. *anatelei*, "dawn," "rise up," "spring up."

27. Ps 72.7 (71.7 LXX).

28. Cyril is stressing the fact that the Greek verb in the psalm citation is not merely *anairethêsesthai*, but *antanairethêsesthai*, the addition of the prefix *anti-* giving the sense of "in return," that is, something done back.

29. *teleios*, "full," "perfect."

30. Cf. 1 Cor 1.13.

31. Acts 8.34.

all the proper marks of deity. Yet the Lawgiver also declared, *"Let it be a male."* Christ himself was and is likewise male, he who planted within all of us the seeds of divine knowledge, as though we were a desirable land. So, as it is contained in the prophetic word, he makes humanity perfect for God the Father through the gospel teachings.[32]

In addition to this, the Passover was to be kept annually at its appointed time, so that a year would not be whole or would still remain incomplete without it. This was also the case because this most divine feast that relates to suffering would be celebrated on a yearly basis by those who obtain good things from that suffering.[33]

It says it should be taken *"from the lambs or from the kids."* The lamb is understood by the law to be a victim that is pure and without blemish, while the kind of animal taken from the kids is always offered for the sake of sins at the altar. [428] This same thing you shall find in Christ also. For he himself was, as it were, a sacrificial victim without blemish, offering himself up as a pleasing aroma to God the Father, slain like a kid on behalf of our sins.

Furthermore, after the animal was slain, they were commanded to smear the doorposts and lintel of the house with its blood. This, it seems to me, signifies nothing other than the fact that it is with the noble and precious blood of Christ that we protect our own earthly house, that is, our body, ridding it from the deadness caused by transgression through sharing in his life. For partaking of Christ is life and sanctification. Also, we confound the Destroyer himself. Through the application of the blood we keep far from us the demon who had designs against us, and put to death the passions arising from carnal affections.

You are to understand the doors of the house mentioned just now to mean plainly our senses, through which the character of things is administered to the hearts of us all, and through which an innumerable multitude of desires pours in.

32. Cf. Heb 10.1; 11.40.

33. By this Cyril seems to mean the annual Christian celebration of Easter.

The prophet Joel also speaks of such entry-ways[34] when he says, "They will enter through our windows like thieves,"[35] for they were not smeared with the blood of Christ.

It commands that the meat should be eaten at night, that is, during the present age. For this is what Paul declared: "The night is far gone, and the day is near."[36] Here he expressly calls the age to come "day," which Christ himself will illuminate. So, it says, they should eat the meat in this age. For while we are in this world we shall continue to partake of Christ in a most earthy manner through his holy flesh and[37] blood. But when we come to the day of his power, as it is written,[38] and when we have ascended to the radiant splendor of the saints, we will be further sanctified in another way, as the dispenser and giver of the good things to come knows.

In another manner, as the death of Christ is shown forth by way of accommodation[39] on our account, the partaking of his holy flesh and the drinking of his saving blood likewise serve as a confession of his suffering. For he himself says this in a certain place, when he was instructing his disciples with regard to the mystery,[40] "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim my death."[41] And so during the present age, through partaking of those things just mentioned, we suitably proclaim his death. When, however, he comes in the glory of the Father, it will no longer be suitable that we should make this confession of his suffering, but we will come to know him face-to-face as purely God, as Paul says, for we shall glorify him, he says, as Lord.[42] For having died once, he no longer dies; death has no more do-

34. Lit. "doors." It is necessary to understand in the following citation that in Greek the words for "door" (*thura*) and "window" (*thuris*) are closely related.

35. Jl 2.9.

36. Rom 13.12.

37. Var. add "precious."

38. Cf. Ps 110.3 (109.3 LXX).

39. *oikonomikôs* here may bear the more technical sense of "by way of the economy of the Incarnation."

40. Var. "mysteries."

41. 1 Cor 11.26. The words are in fact those of the apostle Paul, with the change of the original "his death" to "my death."

42. Cyril may be thinking of Phil 2.11.

minion over him, in accordance with the words of Paul.[43] Therefore, he also said, "Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him in this way no longer."[44] For at that time, when the divine economy in which he became flesh finally reaches its conclusion, we will know him more distinctly, not from those things which make him human, but from those things by which he is truly God. [429] For to speak about his fleshly nature will most probably then be redundant, for there will be a superior knowledge, and a certain divine understanding of salvation will come forth from him[45] and illuminate us with the glory suited to one who is God.

The law commanded that the meat of the lamb should be eaten roasted in fire, for those who come forth to take hold of Christ ought to be heated in their spirits. Paul too commands them to be fervent in spirit.[46]

Yet they were also to eat it, it says, with unleavened loaves and bitter herbs. This indicates in a figure that those who have become partakers of Christ ought to nourish their souls with unleavened, or the purest, desires, conforming their way of life to a genuine and unadulterated simplicity. But they are not for this reason to shy away from the bitterness of trials, as someone said, "Child, when you come to serve God,[47] prepare your soul for testing. Set your heart aright and persevere."[48]

It further says, *"you shall not eat any of it raw."* Why is this? The one who eats it raw does not eat it softened by cooking, yet such food cannot at all be managed by one's teeth. This they most certainly do who do not[49] analyze the word concerning Christ through much inquiry, subjecting it to the fire and testing it, as was sung by David,[50] "And in my meditation the fire will burn."[51]

43. Cf. Rom 6.9.
44. 2 Cor 5.16.
45. Var. add "with the most perfect apprehension."
46. Rom 12.11.
47. Var. "the Lord."
48. Sir 2.1–2.
49. Var. add "finely."
50. Var. "by the melodious singer."
51. Ps 39.3 (38.4 LXX).

It also forbids the meat that they eat to be boiled in water, pointing to watered-down and feeble opinions about Christ, which would not be wholesome food for the minds of believers. The most watered-down opinion concerning him imagines that he was not God according to his nature, but brings him down to the order of created things. This some do in their ignorance and sloth, bending to their own will those things relating to the divine economy that have been said about him on account of his becoming human, and making some manner of food out of the impiety that is within them. So it says, *"you shall not eat it boiled in water, but roasted in fire,"* for the reason given above, and because the words of the Lord burn like fire. For all those sayings about his deity are hot, and there is nothing watery or cold about them, as it again says in the book of Psalms, "Your word has been refined with fire, and your servant loves it."[52]

It orders them to eat *"the head, with the legs and the entrails."* This means that the entire knowledge of the mystery pertaining to Christ is to be received into the minds of believers. For it is necessary to know first of all that the Word, being God, was there in the beginning, in the Father and with the Father, that he is the head, the beginning of all mystery. Then secondly, that as God also, he will come again as judge, bringing an end to our present economy, for this is what the feet symbolize, being the end parts of the whole body. And by the entrails you are to understand the Word being hidden, as it were, within his Incarnation. By means of such things, therefore, our faith is complete, and Christ is whole and complete in us through such knowledge. It is for this reason, it seems to me, [432] that John said, "Who is, who was, and who is to come."[53]

Then the Lawgiver gave the further command, *"Do not leave any of it until morning."* Taken figuratively, it would seem that this forbids any untoward delay in coming to a complete understanding. For there should be no delay, it says, in attaining the perfect and true knowledge about Christ. Nor should any hold themselves back for too long from the grace of partaking of him perfectly, but, having partaken of him once and for all,

52. Ps 119.140 (118.140 LXX).
53. Rv 1.4, 8; 4.8; 11.17.

should take hold of him wholly. This they do who, having tasted the doctrines in which they were instructed about Christ, and retaining the enlightenment given through the Spirit, they then defer the grace that comes through baptism for an overly long period, until they have come to old age. The fact is that considerable harm results from this that is quite unexpected. For although their own purposes are well met, their hope is never secure. While the intention of such a person has been fulfilled, and he has indeed been sanctified, yet he only has the forgiveness of his transgressions, and so he brings the bare talent to his master, having made no effort to gain more for him.[54]

It further says, *"none of its bones shall be broken."*[55] The fact is that bones can never be eaten with our teeth. Now the Word is such a one that is exposed to human minds, appearing white, if I might put it thus, even while he is hidden with respect to his deity. That he is the Son according to his nature, and that he was begotten by God the Father, we understand correctly and well believe, but we inquire no further, in keeping with what the holy prophet said. For who knows how to speak of the manner of his generation? So how could the prophet not be speaking the truth when he cried out, "Who shall declare his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth"?[56]

Surely then, the bones here mean the soundness of doctrines in the mind. The Lawgiver has not permitted us to break these. But the heretics who pervert the correct teachings break them completely. They waste their efforts on the manner of the divine and ineffable generation, suffering from incomparably careless thinking, and refusing to accept in their minds what was written: "Who has measured heaven with the span of his hand?"[57] So whatever we ourselves see fit to avoid, we wisely shrink back from breaking the lamb's bones, but we rather accept by faith those things done for us.

It should of course also be recalled that what was written

54. Cf. Mt 25.24–27.
55. Cf. also Jn 19.36.
56. Is 53.8.
57. Is 40.12.

concerning our Savior is to be taken quite literally, since the soldiers of Pilate did not break his legs, as it is written.[58]

It says that whatever remained of it until the morning had to be burned. The morning indicates the illumination of the coming age, when we shall see our God and our king face-to-face, and no longer dimly in a riddle and a mirror as we do now, nor in a shadow or in part, as Paul says.[59] Through the most radiant knowledge that there will be at that time, the dimness which obscured, as it were, our contemplation of him will be done away. So when it says that whatever remained of it until the morning should be burned in fire, this is again by way of a figure.

It commands those who participate in the meal [433] to do so in this manner: *"Let your loins be girded,"* it says; *"let your shoes be on your feet, and your staffs in your hands; and you shall eat it with haste, for it is the Lord's Passover."* The girding of the loins symbolizes vigor and an active disposition, as was spoken by God to the righteous Job: "Gird up your loins like a man."[60] And again in the prophets it says concerning a certain person, "And he will have his loins girded with righteousness,"[61] where righteousness is put in place of strength and vigor. The shoe signifies the disposition that is prepared to go wherever God wills without hesitation. Paul too gives such an interpretation: "And having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace."[62] And to this the prophet Jeremiah adds, "Now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways?"[63] As for the staff in the hand, this indicates the hope that sustains us and maintains our endurance, as is set down in the prophets, "Hope in the Lord, and lean upon God."[64]

It also commands that the lamb should be eaten *"with*

58. Cf. Jn 19.33.
59. Cf. 1 Cor 13.12.
60. Jb 38.3; 40.7.
61. Is 11.5.
62. Eph 6.15.
63. The citation is in fact not from Jeremiah, but from Dt 10.12.
64. Ps 4.6; Is 50.10.

haste."[65] This very clearly represents the fact that those who have come to participate in Christ ought not to be sluggish or lax in the matter of good works. Rather, they are to show forth a keen and ardent enthusiasm in whatever might seem profitable to them. What the blessed Paul wrote also comes to mind: "Do you not know that those running in a race all run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it."[66]

Now accepting that we ought in every way to pursue what is profitable, I will come to a second meaning. One would not want those who have been sanctified through Christ to be seen to live luxuriously or to be slack. Rather, the law prescribes the manner that was appropriate for those who were to make a journey, most likely pointing to two things. Either it shows that those things then existing in type and shadow would at some time pass on and run to the reality, or it relates to those who have partaken of Christ once and for all, who have availed themselves of feet that are, as it were, lively and most ready to run with enthusiasm after that which is good, to go in the path of all virtue, fleeing the loathsome pleasures that are in the world.

It then directly puts forward the reason why those just mentioned to us should present themselves in such a way, saying that *"it is the Lord's Passover,"* that is, an offering to mark a passing over. For we pass over from a worldly life to a life devoted to the love of God.

Immediately after this, God also reveals to them the kind of benefit they would gain from this, and how great it would be. For he declared that he would strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt,[67] but for those who have eaten the lamb, it says that the blood would be a sign, and hence they would be under its protection so as not to be destroyed when he struck Egypt. For God punishes the unbelieving and disobedient, and the one who has no share in the sanctification that comes from Christ. He makes himself known only to those who have been anointed with the blood of the true Lamb, and deems them worthy

65. The Greek word for "haste" (*spoudê*) may also have the sense of "effort" or "zeal."

66. 1 Cor 9.24.

67. Var. omit "of Egypt."

of his good attentions. [436] And it is not fitting for those who have been sanctified to perish along with the ungodly, but he grants them the more special benevolence.

It commands that for seven whole days those who had eaten the sacred lamb should be fed with unleavened bread, which is, it seems to me, an encouragement for those who have been sanctified through Christ to feed their souls on the purest desires, which allow no space for any vileness.

It says that the first day and the seventh day should be called holy. For the time at the beginning of our creation was holy, as our forefather Adam had not yet departed from paradise on account of his transgression, but he continued to live in it all the while he kept the commandment that had been given. Furthermore, the time in the later days is also holy, through Christ, who justifies by faith those that draw near to him, and brings them back to the estate that we were in at the beginning. Surely then, in these matters the whole mystery concerning our Savior is prefigured to us. And so he himself spoke very appropriately to the Jews when he said, "If you believed Moses, you would believe in me, for he wrote about me."[68]

Concerning the dedication of the firstborn

1. We have indeed "been redeemed from our former way of life inherited from our forefathers, not with silver or gold," as it is written, "but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or defect. He was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times."[69] While he was by nature God, in the form of God the Father and equal to him, the Only-Begotten was also named the firstborn, appeared on earth, and lived alongside humankind.[70] For somewhere in the Psalms he speaks of us to God the Father in heaven, saying, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in

68. Jn 5.46.

69. Cf. 1 Pt 1.18–20.

70. Var. "equal to him, and he appeared upon earth, living alongside human beings, and is named the Only-Begotten firstborn."

the midst of the assembly I will sing praises to you."[71] For having taken human nature upon himself, and having brought himself down to our level, he is not ashamed to call us brothers,[72] since through him we have been called to adoption as sons.[73]

It is also true, and it has been attested to by the events themselves, that the Father gave his own Son as a ransom for the salvation of us all. So, as Paul says, "We were bought with a price, and we are not our own."[74] Rather, "one died for all, so that we all may no longer live for ourselves, but for him who died for us and was raised again."[75]

Each person, therefore, who has been saved through Christ, and who has been greatly enriched by becoming conformed to him through sanctification in the Spirit, is indebted to God for his own life. This is made plain when the all-wise Moses spoke to those of old: *"And it shall come to pass, when the Lord your God brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to your fathers, and I give it to you, that you shall set apart for the Lord every male that first opens the womb, everything that first opens the womb from the herds or from your cattle; as many males as you shall have, you shall consecrate them to the Lord. Everything that first opens the womb of the donkey, you shall exchange for a lamb; but if you will not exchange it, you shall redeem it. Every firstborn of your sons you shall redeem."*[76]

When the congregation later gathered at Horeb, there came the same word, and the Lawgiver again stated the law, saying, *"The firstborn of your sons you shall give to me. So you shall do with your calf, your sheep, and your ox. For seven days it shall be with its mother, and on the eighth day you shall give it to me. And you shall be holy men to me."*[77] [437]

2. So the God of all appropriately enjoined the dedication of all,[78] and affirmed that we should consecrate the males to him. For when the firstborn of the Egyptians perished, every house-

71. Ps 22.22 (21.23 LXX).
72. Cf. Heb 2.11.
73. Var. "to equality."
74. 1 Cor 6.19–20.
75. 2 Cor 5.14–15.
76. Ex 13.11–13.
77. Ex 22.29–31 (22.28–30 LXX).
78. Var. "of the firstborn."

hold of the beloved Israel was saved and escaped the Destroyer, being anointed with the blood of the lamb as a figure of Christ, who on our account entered among the dead in order that he might annul death. Thus those who have been saved are no longer properly their own, but rather it is fitting that he who put himself in peril on their behalf should henceforth obtain them as his own.

For in this way they who are able to deliver people who have fallen under the control of barbarians, and to set them free from the servitude unexpectedly placed upon them by undertaking to fight for them, then take on, in effect, the position of being their masters, having gained with their own blood those they seized. Our Lord Jesus Christ did the very same thing, it seems to me, when he bound[79] the hoard of unclean demons, and laid down his own blood on our behalf, and having set aside death in this way, and having annulled incorruption, he henceforth made us to be his own, that we should no longer live our life, but rather live his. For if he had not died for us, we would not have been saved, and if he had not gone among the dead, the irresistible power of death would not have been overthrown. Thus the divine Paul also instructed in this mystery those who had been saved through Christ when he said, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me."[80] So, as the people of Israel lived, in effect, the life of the slain lamb, so we too live our own life no longer, but the life of Christ who died for us, yet rose to life again. For he, being God, is by nature life itself.

It is therefore necessary that the life we live should be holy, for such is the life of Christ. So choosing to live in a holy manner, we shall be made rich through his most excellent image, having become conformed to the Only-Begotten, as to God, who for our sake became one of us, a firstborn son on account of his humanity. And so we shall truly be a sacred offering dedicated to God the Father. Therefore, the firstborn males are

79. Var. "harassed," "attacked."
80. Gal 2.20.

consecrated, because they are perceived to be made in the image of Christ. For when mothers were bringing their babes to him, our Lord Jesus Christ received them gladly, and declared to the holy disciples, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."[81] From this you understand that God the Father loves the firstborn as being one who conspicuously manifests the image of Christ.

Now it was only the males of the firstborn that were selected. For it was necessary for that which was to be saved by Christ himself to be the one that was manifestly the most excellent, and for those fashioned according to his image to have the form of firstborn sons. For he is both firstborn and male, because he did not know the weakness that leads to sin, but it is the female that is a figure of that weakness. It is necessary, therefore, that those bearing the image of Christ should eschew a weak[82] mind, [440] to cast off feebleness, slackness, and frailty, as being truly accursed and hateful to God, and to maintain full strength, choosing a manly zeal as being that which is required for attaining virtue.

"Everything that first opens the womb of the donkey, shall be exchanged for a lamb." And what is this saying? According to the law a donkey was unholy and profane, but a lamb was holy, and so it was presented on behalf of the donkey. Once more the law figuratively represents in these matters the fact that what is profane and unholy is made holy in Christ, and that through him that which is unacceptable is made acceptable. For when we were sinful and unclean, for our sakes he became a holy sacrifice and a pleasing aroma. For he died for sinners, the righteous for the unrighteous,[83] the clean for the unclean, just as the lamb died for the donkey.

So the firstborn of men were redeemed by offerings, which were most likely given in payment for those who were being presented. For what reason? Because that which was wholly dedicated and consecrated to God needed to be completely

81. Mt 19.14.
82. *thêluprepês*, "befitting a female."
83. Cf. 1 Pt 3.18.

sacrificed. Yet God, who created everything in a state of incorruptibility, refrains from the killing of men. For "he did not create death, nor does he delight in the destruction of living creatures," as it is written.[84] Nor does he take pleasure from those who are perishing, as he does from the destruction of the unclean demons. Rather, he commands that a ransom should be laid down on their behalf, and so we ought to confess openly that, in essence, we owe even our very lives to him. For he indicated this ransom when he commanded that the sum called the "two drachmas" should be paid.[85] So the true ransom given for all is to be understood as Christ himself, through whom and in whom we have overcome corruption, for he gave himself for us.

It said that the lamb should spend seven days with its mother, and be offered on the eighth. For that which was born from the womb was not then immediately slaughtered, but it was first prepared somewhat and strengthened a little with the milk of the mother that bore it. Only then, God indicated, could it suitably be used as a fragrant offering. Yet this was also a figure of something mystical and essential, which right up to the present time has been observed by us whose practice it is to dedicate animals[86] of a spiritual nature to the God who rules over all. For we do not present to God those recently called, who have only just come to faith, and who are uninitiated in divine and bloodless sacrifice. But rather we first instruct them, committing them, as it were, into the care of their mother, that is, the church, and we fatten them upon the word, as though with a kind of smooth milk suitable for infants. The divine Paul, for instance, writing to those who had not yet attained maturity, said, "I gave you milk to drink, and not solid food; for you were not yet able to take it, and even now you are still not able."[87] Again in another letter he says, "For everyone who partakes of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is an in-

84. Wis 1.13.
85. Cf. Ex 30.13; Mt 17.24.
86. Var. "firstborn."
87. 1 Cor 3.2.

fant. But solid food is for the mature, whose faculties have been trained through practice to discern both good and evil."[88]

So those who have reached maturity, and have been extremely well nourished through words of instruction, we bring forward on the eighth day, that is, once the time of their infancy has passed and a new period of time then comes after it, in which [441] one may seasonably and suitably set before them the mystery of Christ. For the eighth day signifies to us the time of the resurrection, when Christ, having endured death for our sakes, came back to life, to whom we are conformed, having died spiritually through holy baptism in order that we might also attain the resurrection. Paul likewise affirms this when he writes, "For we were buried with him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too should walk in newness of life."[89]

Therefore, we have been born again through faith into a knowledge of the truth, and have now become rich through our conformity to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the firstborn among us and for us. By drinking the pure, spiritual milk, and growing up into the measure of his full stature, as it is written,[90] we will then all be sacred, an offering dedicated to God. We died to the world, yet we are spiritually alive to God in holiness. This, in my view, is the significance of sacrificing the firstborn animals at the altar. The divine Paul writes to those who have been sanctified in this way, "For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."[91] The death of the saints is, therefore, sacred, and it seems to me that the blessed David viewed it in such a way, for he says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."[92]

Now the sort of ideas expressed above, as I consider it, would not only doubtless be appropriate for those Gentiles who turn to a knowledge of the truth, but also especially for those

88. Heb 5.13–14.
89. Rom 6.4.
90. Cf. Eph 4.13.
91. Col 3.3.
92. Ps 116.15 (115.6 LXX).

called out from the ministration under the law to justification in Christ and sanctification in the Spirit. For the lamb, or the baby calf, was reared for seven days by its mother, and then on the eighth day it was presented. In this, I believe, God was showing by means of a figure (for the law was a shadow) how it was necessary that those who would be holy and who would be offered up as a pleasing aroma to God should first be instructed through types, and by teachings that are not very suitable for grown men, but are rather more fit for infants. So the mystery of Christ signified by the eighth day is a particularly appropriate time for attaining the perfection mentioned above.

God was, therefore, unapproachable by means of the ministration of the law, but he became approachable only through Christ. For through him we have obtained access,[93] which came as it were after the seventh day, that is, once the Sabbath day pertaining to the law had passed, it being a complete and utter cessation with regard to the ministration according to the law. For the law made no one perfect, but it is Christ who brings us to this. For those who believe are fit for virtue, possessing a perfection of knowledge through him, for we have the mind of Christ. Through him and with him be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.[94] Amen.

Concerning Marah and the tree that was shown to the blessed Moses

1. When the people of Israel departed from the land of the Egyptians, having only just thrown off the grievous yoke of bondage [444], they went through the midst of the sea as though on dry land, passing through unhindered. For at the divine command the waters drew back and stood up like a wall. After this they saw the whole of Pharaoh's army venturing after them and drowning in the waters, and so those who had mercilessly ill-treated them perished miserably. Then they offered up

93. Cf. Rom 5.2.

94. Var. "Through him and with him it is proper to ascribe all glory, honor, and worship to God the Father, with the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever."

songs to God, and honored him with hymns of thanksgiving, saying, *"Let us sing to the Lord, for he is greatly glorified; horse and rider he has cast into the sea. He was my helper and protector for salvation."*[95] For the God of all had worked notable wonders. Besides making it possible for those who were led by him to pass with ease through the sea, he had further shown them very many absolutely astonishing miracles in Egypt. This he did so that from then on they might have it firmly established in their minds and also believe that these things were not done by any of those falsely called gods, being inventions of human design and images merely made out of wood or stone, but that God, being the Lord of all, commands the creation that lies at his feet, and whatever he wishes to accomplish he easily brings to pass. And in order that they should be even more greatly amazed, he ordered them to depart from a wealthy land, and to hasten to the land promised to their fathers, with the all-wise Moses leading and commanding them.

After the events described, the sacred Scripture next explains that *Moses brought up the people of Israel from the Red Sea, and led them into the wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness without finding any water to drink. They came to Marah, and were not able to drink the water of Marah, because it was bitter. For this reason the name of that place was called Bitterness.*[96] *Then the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. He threw the tree into the water, and the water became sweet. There God made for them*[97] *ordinances, statutes,*[98] *and judgments. And there he tested them, and said, "If you will indeed hear the voice of the Lord your God, and do what is pleasing to him, and give heed to his commandments, and keep all his ordinances, no disease which I brought upon the Egyptians will I bring upon you; for I am the Lord who heals you." Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water, and seventy trunks of palm trees; so they camped there beside the waters.*[99]

95. Ex 15.1–2.

96. This is the meaning of the Hebrew name Marah.

97. In both Hebrew and Greek the pronoun is singular, "him," but no doubt the reference is to the people as a whole.

98. Var. omit "statutes."

99. Ex 15.22–27.

Note, then, how prudent it was of God not to bring those who had been redeemed into a state of ease without being exercised, and not to grant them the space to enjoy comforts, so that they should not soon forget the one who was able to deliver them, and so easily sink back into the kind of error[100] that there had been in Egypt. For troubles draw us to God. And so the prophet said, "Lord, in distress I remembered you; your chastening was upon us with slight affliction."[101]

This is the reason why, when they were traveling through a remote, parched land, they lacked those things essential for life, for they did not [445] find any water to drink. So they continued to be thirsty until the third day, when what they longed for was only then discovered. But it was altogether useless, because the water of Marah was bitter. And it was not certain that those thirsty people would be able to survive, since it says that they were close to death. Therefore, they were vexed, and cried out against their mediator, but Moses was at a loss. Then, when the God who knows all things showed him a tree, he threw it into the waters, and incredibly the pool was changed into water that was sweet and most fit for drinking. Having drunk their fill and being strengthened, they marveled at the divine miracle. After this they made camp by twelve springs of water, where there were also seventy trunks of palm trees. And at that time they stayed there refreshing themselves.

So then, that it was by faith and not otherwise that one was able to find the way of salvation, God fully demonstrated through types and shadows. Therefore, God commanded the slaying of the lamb in Egypt, and they were willing to believe because by being anointed with its blood they would avoid the imminent death of the firstborn. May it not most reasonably be claimed that what was done here was an exercise of faith? For how is it, tell me, that death should fear the slaying of a lamb? But the matter was a figure of the mystery. For by his own blood Christ delivers those who are sanctified by faith, and brings about the destruction of death, which is far better.

100. Or "waywardness." This refers no doubt to idolatrous practices.
101. Is 26.16.

Now what more the affair at Marah is about, we shall state as we are able.

2. The inspired Scripture likens the divine word to water. For just as physical water gives life to the body, so too the divine word, when it comes down, gives life to the mind and may profit it beyond measure. So Christ, addressing the crowd of the Jews, cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink."[102] And to the woman of Samaria he said, "Everyone who drinks this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never thirst."[103] So then, when the people of Israel left the hateful servitude of the Egyptians, they underwent a change in their thinking so that they should put into practice[104] what it was that God desired. They had not yet, however, been instructed in the heavenly laws and had not yet tasted the spiritual waters, but had, in effect, a mind that was dry and thirsty.

Then they happened to come to Marah, but they were not able to drink the water, because it was bitter. Once Moses had thrown in the tree, the water was relieved of its innate bitterness. So what, then, is Marah? One might say that it is the letter of the law. For the law is bitter, since it brings punishment. Therefore, the divine Paul said, "Anyone who disregarded the law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses."[105]

We see that it was bitter and grievous even for the people who perhaps wished to practice it correctly. And so the divine disciples, speaking to those who after coming to faith also adhered to certain elements of the ministration under the law, expressly said, "Now why do you put God to the test by putting a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear?"[106] So too the blessed [448] Paul speaks of the ordinance given through the all-wise Moses as the ministry of condemnation, for he said, "If the ministry

102. Jn 7.37.
103. Jn 4.13–14.
104. Var. "so as to wish to be mindful of."
105. Heb 10.28.
106. Acts 15.10.

of condemnation had glory, how much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory!"[107] And in another place he said, "The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."[108] The letter, I consider, clearly speaks of the law, while the Spirit speaks of worship in the Spirit, that is, the gospel. For the law is bitter, and Marah in fact means "bitter."

Now, that the instruction given through the law, inasmuch as it came in figures, did not of itself give life, is abundantly confirmed. "For no one is justified before God by the law," as it is written.[109] The law itself, however, would one day indeed give life, and be freed from the bitterness that exists with respect to the letter, when it would be receptive of the mystery pertaining to Christ: "For Christ is the end of the law for salvation to everyone who believes,"[110] when, of course, the law is understood spiritually. What happened at Marah was plainly a figure of this. For the tree depicts the cross of the Savior, namely the mystery concerning him, and it is precisely when he is accepted by those under the law that they find the bitter to be sweet. For to those who believe in Christ the law does not bring accusations or punishment, but it is now a giver of life, the literal sense being wonderfully transformed for us into a spiritual contemplation, and a guide to Christ, who is life and the giver of life. Then the law will also define ordinances and judgments for us. For it will directly lead us to that which pleases him and will show us the path to all that is noble, making us free from fear and the expectation of punishment. For *"no plague,"* it says, *"which I brought upon the Egyptians will I bring upon you."* Surely then, to those under the law who receive this mystery it gives the wonderful hope of being removed from punishment. This, it seems to me, is what the Savior himself said to the people of the Jews at the time of his visitation, "Truly, truly, I say to you that he who hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has

107. 2 Cor 3.9.

108. 2 Cor 3.6.

109. Gal 3.11.

110. Rom 10.4. Cyril puts "salvation" in place of the original reading "righteousness."

passed from death to life."[111] And again, "Whoever believes in the Son is not condemned."[112]

So once God has shown forth the ordinances of Christ, then and only then shall we come to Elim, which means "going up."[113] For we ascend from our former state of infancy to a perfection of mind, attaining to the measure of the full stature of Christ, and we delight in the springs of spiritual water. These twelve springs portray to us the band of holy apostles. Yet we also find there to be seventy trunks of palm trees, for it is written that after the holy apostles the Lord appointed seventy others.[114] That the divine disciples are indeed springs of water pouring out for us the divine and saving word that is necessary for life, the God of all wonderfully shows to those in the time of the law who were justified, saying, "Draw water with joy from the wells of salvation."[115] And the divine [449] singer said concerning every saint, "The righteous will flourish like a palm tree."[116] And no wonder, for Christ himself is called this by the inspired Scripture. For the spiritual bride, that is the church, spoke of the heavenly bridegroom from above, namely Christ, and said, "I will climb up the palm tree, I will take hold of its high branches."[117] For this tree is always flourishing, is both sweet and well-rooted, being pure white on the inside. And such spiritually is Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the manna and the quails

1. Now the God of all performs wonders, going from strength to strength, as it is written.[118] He finds a means of providing for

111. Jn 5.24.

112. Jn 3.18.

113. The name Elim is of uncertain meaning. The sense of "going up" is extremely doubtful.

114. Cf. Lk 10.1.

115. Is 12.3.

116. Ps 92.12 (91.13 LXX).

117. Song 7.8 (7.9 LXX).

118. Cyril may have had in mind the phrase "from strength to strength" occurring in Ps 84.7 (83.8 LXX), although it is not there speaking of God.

the helpless, in every place taking thought for his glory, and showing in many different ways that with him alone there is the ability to accomplish effortlessly deeds that transcend speech.[119] And it is right that we should be amazed at such things, that God might be perceived through them all, not as though they were anything done by the craft of men, by those given over to ungodliness, but actions carried out truly according to his nature. For from those things that are most gloriously performed, one might also quite readily perceive his pure nature, to which belong his goodness, his omnipotence, and the irresistible power to do absolutely anything that he chooses. Together with these there is also his longsuffering.

Observe that what I am saying is also very evident in those matters set before us right now. For it is written, *On the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of the land of Egypt, the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The people of Israel said to them, "Would that we had been struck by the Lord and died in the land of Egypt, when we sat by pots of meat and ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to make this whole congregation die of hunger." Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain down bread for you from heaven, and the people shall go out and gather the amount they need for the day, that I might test them to see if they will follow my law. On the sixth day they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be double what they gather on the other days."*[120]

Now the firstborn of the Egyptians utterly perished, as we said previously, and the people of Israel were sent away from that country. It was not possible, it may be said, for them to arrange any provisions, for they had only brought with them lumps of dough that was not yet leavened.[121] Being supplied merely with what happened to be at hand, they departed in haste, the same fear being both upon the Egyptians who were persecuting them and upon those suffering the persecution. For the Egyptians expected to join shortly those who had already perished, unless they submitted to the divine command

119. Or "reason."
120. Ex 16.1–5.
121. Var. add "wrapped up in their garments"; as Ex 12.34.

and sent Israel out of their country. And the Israelites wholly believed that, if they should be held back and lose the opportunity to flee, more agonies would come on top of their previous sufferings, [452] and that they would be in peril of dying without mercy.

So they departed, not fully having taken thought for the journey, and having taken hardly anything in their hands, but by necessity they had just grabbed those things lying around their houses that were easy to carry. These things they soon ate up, and being then perplexed about where they could find the necessities of life in the wilderness, they lapsed into a longing for the food of Egypt. They forgot that they had been brought out from great extremities and from bondage in Egypt, and cried out for help by any means. They were angry that they had been let go, and preferred to have their vile bellies full than to have the much-desired freedom that they had all prayed for.

Now this matter troubled the mediator, Moses. So God promised that he would immediately supply them with an abundance of food. Although they had provoked him greatly, he still dealt with them gently. While there was nothing at all blameworthy in their desire for him to give them the necessities of life, their grumbling was deeply grievous. For the Savior himself taught us to say in our prayers, "Give us today our daily bread."[122] When we say this, we are of course in no way bringing an accusation against the Master, but we are rather asking him for the necessities of life. The people of the Jews, however, in having to ask for food, were angry that they had been set free, and foolishly they insulted such a noble and precious grace, as though it had sent them away from the most pleasurable things, like bread and meat. Therefore, they grumbled and cried out in a profane manner. Yet God was longsuffering, and promised them an abundance beyond expectation. And so in his ineffable power he appointed quails in the evening, and then manna also in the morning. As the divine David said, "He gave them bread from heaven; men ate the bread of angels."[123] He assures us through the trials and events of life that God is able to give

122. Mt 6.11.
123. Ps 78.24–25 (77.24–25 LXX).

food and to prepare a table in the desert, as our Lord Jesus Christ also did when he performed the same miracle. He broke five loaves and satisfied many people in the wilderness, when twelve baskets of pieces left over were gathered.[124]

The way in which miracles are wrought is completely beyond investigation, and so such things that cannot be understood should be revered in faith, and may God hear from all those who are amazed, "I know that you can do all things, and nothing is impossible for you."[125]

2. In these matters, however, our discussion has been about physical things.[126] But for us who are especially eager to pursue the truth, it is necessary to inquire closely what the interpretation arising out of spiritual contemplation might now be, or what the figures of the law might mean. By this means we will also learn how the way of life under the law is undoubtedly inferior to that under the gospel. The former was not free from accusations of carnality,[127] nor was it delivered from earthly desires. But the divine way of life under the gospel is spiritual and flawless, having incomparable beauty. So we shall receive a clear demonstration and sure understanding with regard to each of these matters as we carefully examine what is stated about them both in [453] the inspired Scripture.

Now it says, *In the evening quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew had come to rest around the camp. And behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine substance, white like coriander upon the ground. When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is this?" For they did not know what it was.*

Then Moses said to them, "This is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat. This is what the Lord has commanded: Each of you gather as much as is needed, an omer for each person according to the number of persons. Let each one gather for those who share his tent." The people of Israel did so, and gathered it, some more, some less. When they measured out an omer, the one who had gathered much had nothing over,

124. Cf. Mt 14.14–21.

125. Jb 42.2.

126. *aisthêtôn*, "tangible," "sensible." By this term Cyril intends the literal meaning.

127. Lit. "love of the flesh."

and the one who had gathered less had no lack. Each one gathered as much as was needed for his family.

Then Moses said to them, "Let no one leave any of it until the morning." But they did not listen to Moses; some left part of it until the morning, and it bred worms and stank, so Moses was angry with them.[128]

After other things it further says, *Then Moses said to them, "This is the word that the Lord has spoken: Tomorrow is the Sabbath, a holy rest to the Lord. Bake whatever you want to bake, and boil whatever you want to boil, and all that is left over store away until the morning." So they kept some of it until the morning, as Moses commanded them, and it did not stink, nor were there any worms in it.*[129]

God commands each one to gather enough for himself. And if one wished perhaps also to gather for those who were not there and to be adorned with the law of love, he by no means prohibits this action. Yet he utterly forbids that it should be kept until the morning. He said that this could only be done the day before the Sabbath, so that the law of rest would not be dishonored. For the manna was not to be found at all on the Sabbath, nor did God send it down, so in this way they were, in effect, compelled to refrain from work on the Sabbath. Some, however, cared little for the divine oracles and kept some manna even before the Sabbath came, and, as the sacred Scripture says, *it bred worms and stank, so Moses was angry.* Moreover, they sallied forth to gather on the Sabbath also, and God was displeased. For this is what is written: *It came to pass on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather manna, but they did not find any. Then the Lord said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to heed my commandments and my law? See, the Lord has given*[130] *this day as a Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he has given you bread for two days. Every one of you should stay in your homes; let no one go out from his place on the seventh day."*[131]

What fitting and most suitable message is there for us in these things that were stated? Why did the quails come in the evening, and why was the manna given in the light of the morn-

128. Ex 16.13–20.
129. Ex 16.23–24.
130. Var. add "you" (as Ex 16.29).
131. Ex 16.27–29.

ing? I, for my part, believe it is proper to inquire into this closely, and before all else, into what is prefigured by the quails, and also by the manna. [456]

3. That the life of the Jews was not free from carnal lusts may readily be understood, and the fact that they sought to make the meat of Egypt their food clearly proves this, and shows that their mind was overcome by such an inclination, and all but dominated by it. Yet in these matters there does not appear to be anything that affects us, because we have been sanctified in Christ, and we are above fleshly impurity. For the divine Paul bears witness and writes, "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."[132] And what does it mean to say they "have crucified" the flesh except that they have delivered it over to death, spiritually speaking, since they do not suffer themselves to live according to the flesh, nor do they care to set their minds upon what is transient? Rather, they put to death what is earthly in them: immorality, passion, and evil desire,[133] and they spend their lives upon the earth striving after a heavenly way of life. For the sacred Scripture speaks of this when it exclaims, "Walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify[134] the desires of the flesh."[135]

So then, the mind of the Jews was feeble and was very easily overcome by the assault of the passions, for it still had a love for the things of the flesh and yielded to the more earthly concerns. This, I say, is what is signified to us by means of the quail.

God does indeed provide for those who seek him, not inducing them to desire, nor allowing them to be overwhelmed by passions. For to live an outstanding life and to be wholly sanctified was not for those under the law, but was rather reserved for those living by the Spirit. That is why God also promised through the prophet a new covenant,[136] not like the first one, because it was not without fault. But he promised another covenant that was spiritual, able to perfect the believer's conscience.

132. Gal 5.24.
133. Cf. Col 3.5.
134. Or "you will not gratify."
135. Gal 5.16.
136. Cf. Jer 31.31.

Observe how the flight of quails comes to the synagogue of the Jews in the evening, for it says, *In the evening quails came up.* By implication this is showing us how the one who loves earthly things does not exist in spiritual light, but in the darkness of night. And the matter is undeniably so, for the mind of the Jews has not been set free from ignorance and dullness, that is, from a spiritual gloom. Accordingly, Christ proclaimed, "I am the light of the world."[137] Therefore, those who do not yet believe are still in the gloom or in darkness, as it were, for they have not come to the light. So Christ said somewhere concerning the Pharisees and the people under their influence, "Leave them alone, for they are blind guides of the blind."[138] So then, the mind of the Jews is darkened. For this reason they have a morbid fleshly craving and all but depend upon earthly things.

Now let us consider the manna to be a shadow and figure of the teachings and spiritual gifts given through Christ, which things are from heaven above and have nothing earthly about them, nor are they tainted with fleshly abominations. Truly these are not the food of men only, but also of angels. For in himself the Son manifested the Father to us, and through him we have come to believe[139] the teaching concerning the holy and consubstantial Trinity, and we have been well and truly guided into every path of virtue. So the correct and unadulterated knowledge of these things is indeed spiritual food.[140] [457]

The supply of Christ's teachings was given, so to speak, as if in the light of day. Accordingly, the manna was given to those in ancient times at daybreak, as the light began to shine. So upon us who believe, the day has dawned, as it is written, "The morning star has risen in all our hearts,"[141] and, "The sun of righteousness has appeared,"[142] that is, Christ, the giver of spiritual manna.[143]

For that physical manna was, as it were, an image, but Christ

137. Jn 8.12.
138. Mt 15.14.
139. Var. "we have been instructed in."
140. Or "the food of [our] spirits."
141. 2 Pt 1.19.
142. Mal 4.2.
143. Or "the intelligible manna."

is the true manna. This is certain from what he said to the Jews: "Your fathers ate manna in the desert and died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that anyone might eat from it and not die. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If anyone eats from this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."[144]

Our Lord Jesus Christ provides us with food for everlasting life, both by his counsels, which lead to godliness, and by the mystical blessing.[145] He himself therefore truly is, and through him comes, the divine, life-giving manna. It is the one who eats this manna that is free from corruption and escapes death, not those who ate the physical manna. For the figure was not able to save, but it was merely a semblance of the reality.

Having sent down the manna like rain from above, God commanded each to gather as much as was needed, those living in the same tent gathering together if they wished. For it says, *"Let each one of you gather with those who share his tent,"* and also, *"Do not let any of it remain until the morning,"* for we must fill ourselves up with the divine teachings of the gospel.

Now to both great and small, Christ apportions to us grace from himself in the same measure, and likewise supplies us all so that we may have life. Moreover, he wishes those who are stronger to gather for others, and to toil on behalf of their brothers, and to bestow upon them the benefit of their labors, and to make them also to become sharers in the heavenly gifts. And this, I believe, is the very thing that was spoken to the holy apostles: "Freely you have received, freely give."[146] For when these gather much manna for themselves, they are eager to share it with those who live in the same tent, that is, the church. For the divine disciples carried out the task of admonishing the believers, of giving instruction, and leading them into everything that was commendable, ungrudgingly providing for all to participate in the grace which they themselves had received abundantly from Christ. And so the blessed Paul wrote

144. Jn 6.49–51.
145. That is, the Eucharist.
146. Mt 10.8.

to certain believers, "For I desire to see you, that I may impart some spiritual gift to you to strengthen you."[147]

Now it may be that *"Let each one of you gather with those who share his tent"* could be understood differently, which is that everyone was not to gather in an indiscriminate way, nor should the manna be mixed together, but that they should undertake the gathering with respect to their kindred, that is, those of their tent. For it is necessary for those of us sharing the same faith to be filled with divine words and to seek the spiritual manna together, not with those whose thoughts radically differ, and so to be foolishly carried away by strangers. [460] So what we do in fact is to drive away from the churches those who hold to other doctrines and who are wayward, while with those who belong to the same faith we receive the food of heaven together in abundance.

It said that they were not[148] to leave any until the morning. The law here again indicates that the use of things that were only types, once the time was passed during which they were still helpful and necessary, wholly and utterly leads to judgment and punishment, for what was kept *bred worms*. That this is a foreshadowing of destruction and punishment is evident. For all those who keep the shadow after the reality has been revealed will suffer destruction and punishment. We can say that some such thing happened to those to whom the blessed Paul wrote, "You who are seeking to be justified by the law have been severed from Christ; you have fallen away from grace."[149] And also, "Having begun with the Spirit, do you now attain your goal by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?"[150] Surely then, it forbids that it should be kept until the morning, so that by means of *"the morning"* we may understand the time after the law, during which Christ's coming occurred and the divine light shone upon us.

Yet, as they were about to observe the Sabbath, the people of Israel did keep it until the morning, and this is what God

147. Rom 1.11.
148. Var. "They were forbidden."
149. Gal 5.4.
150. Gal 3.3–4.

commanded. So what, then, does it mean to keep that which had been gathered prior to the Sabbath, which did not then turn rotten, and which did not make Moses angry with those who kept it?

Now although through faith we come to the Sabbath rest which we understand to exist in Christ, that is, to the rest and cessation from sin, we do not reject as useless the instruction of the law, which was earlier gathered[151] and stored up among us, so to speak, and which leads us to Christ, for the law was a tutor.[152] Rather, having the law as well as the teachings of the gospel, we will not be far from offering befitting praise, and God will not be angry at those who do this. The Savior himself teaches this when he says to us, "Every scribe instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new things as well as old."[153]

So the manna that was gathered up among us beforehand through the law cannot be rejected, since it was something to be kept on the spiritual Sabbath. For we who observe the Sabbath in Christ are presented with the shadows given through Moses, so that in them we may search out the reality. Also, as gathering on the Sabbath was an act that was placed under a curse and under punishment, there was all the more reason for God not to send down the manna. For as in Christ we observe the Sabbath in its spiritual sense, we will no more gather those things which serve as types. We will not suffer circumcision in the flesh, nor will we sacrifice oxen and sheep, but rather we will set aside the earthiness of the types, since we have the actual reality, which is Christ.

4. The discussion about these matters set before us has, to my mind, been sufficiently long and clear. But since in the book called Numbers we have a section in which we find other additional matters narrated, I thought it necessary not to leave those things unexamined about which Exodus is silent. An understanding of these would be rather significant[154] for our readers.

151. Lit. "heaped up."
152. *paidagôgos*, "pedagogue," "guide," "instructor"; cf. Gal 3.24.
153. Mt 13.52.
154. Var. "There would be a rather significant benefit in these things."

Now it is written: "The rabble[155] [461] that was among them had a strong craving, and they and the people of Israel sat down and wept, and said, 'Who will give us meat to eat? We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, and the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic. But now, our appetite is gone; there is nothing before our eyes except this manna!'"[156] Then to these words it adds: "And Moses heard the people of every family weeping, each at the entrance to their tent. Then the Lord became exceedingly angry, and the matter was evil in the sight of Moses."[157]

Note, then, how the Israelites were very easily unsettled. They were not of such a sort as could be of any use to others, but were afflicted with feebleness and were concerned solely with their own affairs. For the rabble were suffering from a most unbecoming and most loathsome craving. And these, when it was reasonable to rebuke them in order to persuade them to be minded to choose a more proper course of action, became even worse. The divine Moses was extremely distraught indeed, and expressly told the God of all that he was not able to bear such a heavy and intolerable burden alone. To show the truth of the matter, and that he bore a most difficult and unmanageable burden,[158] he asked, "Where am I to get meat to give to all these people?" By this time Moses had reached the point of despair over this, wishing that his life would now somehow come to an end, for "If this is how you are going to treat me," he said, "kill me outright, so that I may not see my affliction."[159] God bore with Moses and instructed him to appoint especially chosen men, seventy in number from all the congregation, who would help him and share the responsibility with him. The Lord said to him, "Gather to me seventy men from the elders of Israel, whom you yourself know to be elders of the people and their scribes; and bring them to the tent of witness, and they shall stand there with you. And I will come

155. Or "mixed multitude."
156. Nm 11.4–6.
157. Nm 11.10.
158. Var. add "in the wilderness."
159. Nm 11.15.

down, and I will speak with you there. I will take some of the Spirit that is upon you and will put it upon them; and they will help you bear the impulses of the people, and you will not bear them alone."[160]

When this happened (for Moses immediately put forward those men who were more eminent than the rest), the God of all filled them with the Holy Spirit. Then after this he granted the desires of those who were weeping and sent them the quails. As these birds were lying around the camp in heaps, the people gathered them with great joy. But they devoured them in a manner more suitable to animals, having no care about greediness or concern for moderation.

Although an immeasurable quantity of birds was seized and collected, and the eating of the meat was to last for a whole month,[161] a fatal disease then came upon them, and as the prophet says, "The grave has enlarged its appetite, and opened its mouth without ceasing."[162] For it says, "While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was consumed, the Lord was angry with the people, and he struck them with an exceedingly severe plague. So the name of that place was called Grave of Craving, because there they buried the people who had the craving."[163] For although they [464] lacked none of the good things they needed, but were abundantly fed on allotted supplies of manna, they desired meat and leeks and spoke of cucumbers and melons, as well as onions and garlic. Consequently, once they had eaten, they soon perished. For God gave the quails, not because he approved of their craving, but rather to demonstrate fully through actions that nothing was impossible for him. But following on from this, he further punished those who were guilty of indulging in shameful pleasures.

Something similar befell the wretched Jews at the time of our Savior's visitation. For those former things were shadows of these later ones, and the things that happened long ago were figures that portrayed later events ahead of time. For when the

160. Nm 11.16–17.
161. Cf. Nm 11.21.
162. Is 5.14.
163. Nm 11.33–34.

true manna, Christ, came to us from heaven above and, as it were, fed us, and promised everlasting life, they foolishly chose the inferior and truly worldly benefit to be gained from earthly things. So they not only gave great offense to the God of all, but to the divine Moses himself also, for it is written, "And the Lord became exceedingly angry with his people, and the matter was evil in the sight of Moses."[164] For the mind of the saints always follows the same course chosen by God.

Indeed then, from the parable found in the gospel one might learn that the people of the Jews in every way put temporal and carnal things before the good gifts from above. For it is usual that those invited to a banquet should gather willingly for the wedding, but these went off, one to his field, another to his business. And they made excuses, such as "I have married a wife," or, "I have bought a field and am not able to come." That Moses himself cried out against the disobedience of the Jews, our Lord Jesus Christ confirmed when he said, "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father. The one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me."[165]

Now Moses reckoned that having to bear with Israel any longer was extremely wearisome. So God consecrated seventy other men, as we said before. For the law, of which Moses is reasonably understood to be a figure, was not able to lead us alone. Accordingly, seventy[166] others were appointed, that they should carry out what that man left undone, and they were set forth, so to speak, as a perfect number. For the number seventy was symbolic of something. Who, then, are they? They are those who came after Moses, who were brought forth by Christ to serve as leaders,[167] of whom the divine disciples were the firstfruits of their kind.[168]

God is said to take some of the Spirit that was upon Moses and to put it within those men who were selected, and this was

164. Nm 11.10.
165. Excuses: Lk 14.18, 20. Jesus's words on Moses: Jn 5.45–46.
166. Var. omit "seventy."
167. Var. add "of the people."
168. Lit. "were the firstfruits and fathers."

for no other reason than that we should believe that by the one Holy Spirit, God sanctifies both the saints who came before us and us ourselves. For as the Father is one, so likewise the Son is one, and so too the Holy Spirit is one, who was in the prophets and is in us also. So since the Spirit is one, it is not proper to understand him as being divided among many, but he is indivisible, and yet is in many distributed gifts, [465] having perfection in them all.

One should note that the God of all commanded the seventy chosen men to gather together. But the full number did not assemble, for two of them were missing, Medad and Eldad. Though these were delayed, God still filled them with the Spirit, for they prophesied within the camp. Now some were zealous[169] for Moses over these two, saying moreover that they ought to be restrained. But Moses, who prefigured the mystery of Christ, said, "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, when the Lord shall put his Spirit upon them."[170]

From these matters we understand that the law caught many as in a net, and brought them to God so as to instruct them in the mystery of Christ. Not all, however, were brought like this, but it is also the case that Christ sanctified those who came later.[171] For those from the Gentiles were called to a knowledge of the truth, not through Moses or the law, but rather by the power of God the Father, when he revealed his own image, namely his Son, to those who did not know him. These he appointed to be called and holy, anointing them with his Spirit. And they became zealous, both those under the law who were in Christ and those justified by faith and sanctified by the Spirit. Moses was nevertheless glad at what happened, as he came to learn of the mystery in advance. Surely then, the people of the Jews who are extraordinarily jealous of the saints in Christ are not mindful of these matters that concerned Moses.

So then, harking back to the beginning of the discussion,

169. This same verb (*zêlousi*) also has the sense of "be jealous."

170. Nm 11.29. The first part of the citation has been amended from Cyril's "Who would give prophets to the Lord's people."

171. Cyril here uses exactly the same word (*husterizontas*) as was translated "delayed" a few sentences above in connection with Eldad and Medad.

we said in the first section that the people[172] of the Jews are still carnal. But the others, those who are a people in Christ through faith, are holy and[173] truly greater, for the physical manna served as a shadow and figure of the gifts given through Christ. Besides this, we were taught that if we keep the shadows of the law after the time arranged for them, we shall give offense to God, and we will also be a cause of vexation to the saints themselves. For Moses was angry with those who kept the manna.

In the second section it was seen that the Jews dishonored the spiritual manna. They despised the heavenly things that were given through Christ, but were inclined towards more earthly things, and being very much disposed towards foul pleasures, they perished in a remarkable manner. For it was altogether necessary to regard the things of God as superior, and that through faith, honor should be given to the Savior and Redeemer of us all, namely Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever. Amen.

Concerning the three miracles performed through Moses

1. Truly, nobody is able to examine what the divine Being[174] is really like. For he is utterly unseeable, is beyond all understanding, and surpasses the power of reason. He can only be known by himself alone. Christ explains this when he exclaims, "For no one knows who the Son is, except the Father, or knows who the Father is, except the Son and the one to whom the Son wishes to reveal him."[175] So now the Only-Begotten has shown us the exceptional beauty of God the Father, presenting himself as a radiant image. This is why he says, "He who has seen me has seen the Father."[176] And we have beheld the Son, both

172. Var. "the life . . . is."
173. Var. omit "holy and."
174. Or "nature."
175. Lk 10.22.
176. Jn 14.9.

with the eyes of our hearts and with those of our flesh, when he emptied himself and came down into [468] our estate, even though he existed as God, since he is in the form of God the Father and identical to him, being begotten from him with respect to his nature. Baruch, I believe, was in fact declaring the Word when he said, "This is our God; no other can be compared to him. He has uncovered the whole way of knowledge and given it to his servant Jacob, and to Israel, whom he loved. Afterwards he appeared on earth and lived among humankind."[177] The divine David also expressly declares to us, "The God of gods, the Lord, has spoken and summoned the earth, from the rising of the sun to its setting. Out of Zion comes the excellence of his beauty. God, our God, will come visibly, and will not keep silent."[178] For he came down in the form of fire upon Mount Sinai.

Christ confirmed, however, that these events were figures, and nothing more. For the people of the Jews thought that the ineffable Being could actually be seen, when Moses stood by them at Horeb, and acted as a go-between when he assembled the congregation at Mount Sinai. When the loud blast of the trumpets sounded forth and frightened those who heard it, they thought that they were hearing the divine voice itself. But that it was foolish of them to think this, God[179] clearly affirmed when he said, "You have neither heard his voice, nor seen his form. And you do not have his word abiding in you, because you do not believe the one he has sent."[180]

Surely then, we who believe have seen the Father in the Son, and we have also received the Father's Word. So too have we been redeemed, for it was not a human envoy that saved us, or an angel, neither was it the law given through Moses, but it was the Lord himself, as it is written. That what I am saying is true we may know through the things that are recorded. This is what it says: *And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of*

177. Bar 3.36–38.

178. Ps 50.1–3 (49.1–3 LXX).

179. Var. "Christ."

180. Jn 5.37–38. The Harleian MS begins this citation as follows: "Truly, truly, I say to you."

Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses turned his face away, because he was afraid to look upon God.[181]

Note here the feebleness of the law. For the God of all manifested himself, but when he stood there openly, Moses turned his face away. This was a clear indication to us that neither would the sons of Israel[182] look upon the divine glory of the Son, when he would openly show it forth and lead them to an understanding of it. So he said through the mouth of Isaiah, "I was found by those who did not seek me, I became manifest to those who did not ask for me. I said, 'Behold, here I am,' to a nation that did not believe in me. All day I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and rebellious people."[183]

The Jews, then, did not see the glory of Christ, because they turned away the eyes of their minds. And this, I believe, is what was spoken through the prophet about them, "They turned their back to me, and not their face."[184] The divine Paul also wrote, "Until this day, at the reading of the old covenant, the same veil remains un-lifted, for only in Christ is it taken away. Indeed even to this day, [469] when Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart. But when anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."[185] Yet we who believe do not fear to look upon God, but as the divine Paul further said, "With unveiled face we behold the glory of the Lord."[186]

So Moses turned his face away. Then, when God spoke, telling him that he should go with the elders of the Israelites to the witless Pharaoh to explain that God had summoned the people of Israel to offer sacrifices to him in the desert, God added that they should plunder the Egyptians, the women taking objects of silver and gold and garments from their neighbors and from those who lived with them.

Then it says, *Moses answered, saying, "If they do not believe, or*

181. Ex 3.6.

182. Here following the Harleian text.

183. Is 65.1–2.

184. Jer 2.27. Cyril omits, accidentally no doubt, the negative in "*not* their face," which has here been supplied.

185. 2 Cor 3.14–17.

186. 2 Cor 3.18.

heed my words, for they will say, 'God has not appeared to you,' what shall I say to them?" Then the Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?" And he said, "A staff." The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground." He threw it on the ground and it became a snake,[187] *and Moses fled from it. The Lord said to him, "Stretch out your hand and take hold of its tail." So he stretched out his hand and took hold of its tail, and it became a staff in his hand. "This," said the Lord, "is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of your fathers, has appeared to you, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."*[188]

Moses was indeed afraid that the people of Israel might think him to be a liar and a babbler when he told them the God of all had appeared to him and had commanded him regarding the oppression by the Egyptians, that it was now the right time for it to be brought to an end in a powerful way. Therefore, God commanded him to perform miracles, and to do things that exceeded human nature. So when God transformed the staff into a snake, it would be understood that it really did not come about from Moses himself, but that he was one who received revelations from God above. Now the true sign, which we all believe, is the descent of the Word to become one of us, which is indicated by the staff that was cast on the ground. In what way this is so, I will now try to state, as I am able.

2. The inspired Scripture likens the Word coming forth from God to a staff, because he supports or strengthens everything. "By the Word of the Lord," it says, "the heavens were made strong,"[189] and, "The Lord upholds the righteous."[190] And we have, of course, been brought to the Father through the Son, and he shows this to be true when he says, "I will lead them with my staff."[191]

A staff, in another way, is also a symbol of kingship. So the God and Father of all reigns through the Son. It is to him that the staff of Aaron, which budded in the holy of holies, points, as does the rod that comes out of the root of Jesse. And he is

187. Or "serpent."
188. Ex 4.1–5.
189. Ps 33.6 (32.6 LXX).
190. Ps 37.17 (36.17 LXX).
191. Ezek 20.37.

the spiritual staff that comforts us all, and which wonderfully supports those who believe, in accordance with what is sung in the Psalms to the God and Father of all: "Your rod and staff, they have comforted me."[192]

The staff, then, is the Son. Yet while he was in the hand of the Father and in the exaltedness of his deity, when he had not yet become one of us, we wretches continued to live in a state of ungodliness in the world. We were led astray, [472] serving the creature, and led by unclean spirits into acts of covetousness. But when he forsook, as it were, the loftiness of his own glory (something which, it may truly be said, is beneficial to contemplate), he came down to earth from heaven, as though leaving the Father's hand. He became one of us, being fashioned like those upon the earth, who are full of evil (for the Son called them evil, when he said, "If you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him").[193] We may say that he was, in effect, transformed into a snake, only because he was made in our likeness and in the same form. For if compared to the goodness of God, man is evil.[194] So the staff changed into a snake. For the Only-Begotten became a man, and was counted among the lawless, and was called evil along with us, even though he was good in nature, or rather he was goodness itself.

That we ourselves, however, did indeed receive the Only-Begotten, who became one of us, whereas the people of the Jews had no love for him (for they ran away from him, as it were), is made clear by the sacred Scriptures, for Moses fled from before the snake. Thinking him to be evil, they did not venture[195] to put their faith in him, but rather killed him, crucifying him along with evil men. That, however, they[196] will later take hold of Christ, and recognize that he is in no way evil, but rather that he is the spiritual support and strength of believ-

192. Ps 23.4 (22.4 LXX).
193. Mt 7.11.
194. Var. add "like the serpent."
195. Var. "they were afraid."
196. Var. "Israel."

ers, we know through what happened, for God turned back the fleeing Moses. And when he took hold of the snake, it became a staff in his hand. So then, to those who are ignorant, Christ seems to be evil, because he has the same likeness as ourselves. Yet when someone takes hold of him through faith, he is found to be a staff and a support.

Now the divine miracle involving the staff was in fact sufficiently notable so as to persuade the people of Israel, which is to say all the people of the earth, that God had visited them. But for such who were very much suffering from the inability to give heed, and for those who had no hope of being able to escape the grievous situation that they were in, there was the need for even more miracles, for these were people who had only just been called to obedience.

3. God further said clearly to the holy man, Moses, *"Put your hand inside your robe." So he put his hand inside his robe, and his hand became leprous, like snow. Then God again said, "Put your hand back inside your robe." So he put his hand back inside his robe, and when he removed it from his robe, it had been restored again to the color of his flesh.*[197]

Now, on all counts, to have the ability to remove leprosy is something that is particularly divine.[198] The afflictions involved in this condition are so fierce that they cannot be relieved by the practices of physicians. In such circumstances the one thing needed, one might suppose, is power from above, which nothing can resist, and to which everything is possible and surmountable. Leprosy, then, is the most incurable of diseases.

Consequently, that the things [473] over which men despair, and which are impossible for us, are possible for the God of all and that there is absolutely nothing he considers difficult is seen through the healing of the leprous hand of Moses. And from this, those who were called, that is, those of the race of Israel, knew that even though they were in a situation from which it was most difficult to escape, since they were subjected to the

197. Ex 4.6–7. The phrase "inside his robe" may also be translated as "to his chest" or more quaintly "within his bosom." This is relevant to Cyril's exposition that follows.

198. Or "befitting God."

wickedness of the Egyptians, and suffering, as it were, from a fatal disease, being in slavery to them, yet the skillful physician had the knowledge and was readily able to cure the most severe sufferings, and that without the least difficulty and in a short space of time. For Moses put back his hand in his robe, and it was restored from the disease.

Another matter is, in my opinion, suggested to us here. For the people of Israel, having spent a long time in Egypt, abandoned the virtuousness they had learned from their fathers and from heaven. Instead, having adopted the local practices, they sank into the depths of depravity; as the prophet says, "They served the creature rather than the Creator."[199] They lapsed into every form of impurity, and had a mind that was, in effect, cold and dead. Now the leprosy symbolized impurity and deadness. So God instructed them through this miracle that if he were to receive them, so as to bring them, in effect, back into his robe, they would not have such unruly impurity, but the pollution caused by their[200] deadness would readily be removed from them. And this is what the text is saying to us.

Now I will undertake to explain that in the hand of Moses becoming leprous and being made clean the mystery of Christ is also figuratively depicted.

The divine evangelist John well testifies that all things came into being through the Son, and without him not one thing came into being.[201] Since the Father performs everything whatsoever through the Son, for this reason the inspired Scripture calls him the hand, the arm, and the right hand of the Father. The divine Isaiah, for instance, says, "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"[202] For the wretched Jews continued to be unresponsive and uncontrollable, suffering much from the disease of disobedience. While David said that it was "by the word of the Lord that the heavens were established,"[203] God the Father also af-

199. Cf. Rom 1.25.
200. Var. add "spiritual."
201. Cf. Jn 1.3.
202. Is 53.1.
203. Cf. Ps 33.6 (32.6 LXX).

firmed through the prophets that "with my hand I established the heavens."[204] And to others he declared, "I am your God who has strengthened you; and I have helped you, and have established you with my righteous right hand."[205] So it is the custom of the inspired Scripture to call the Son a "hand."

Now note that the hand of Moses was hidden within his robe,[206] and then, when it was brought out, it appeared leprous. Then once it was placed within his robe again, it was immediately healed of the affliction. We shall discover the meaning of such an action by considering the mystery[207] and the manner of the Son becoming man, and by carefully examining how and in what way this took place.

The Son was indeed in the bosom of God the Father, and through him the Father made all things. For the Son himself [476] is the raised arm, the all-powerful hand, and the wonderful right hand. But when he, in a certain manner, took leave of his own place, becoming man, he took to himself our infirmities, in accordance with what the prophet says,[208] and to him was attributed our character, and he came in our impurity. For the nature of man is impure to God, since what the prophet Isaiah says is true, that "all our righteousness is as a filthy rag."[209] So then, as touching his human nature, the one who is all-pure and who dwells in unapproachable light came with the appearance[210] of impurity.

Now the wretched Jews had gone so far astray that they therefore called him a drunkard and a Samaritan, and one who was born of fornication, and even a sinner also. For they said to the man who had been blind from birth when he was healed, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."[211] But they would never, I believe, have been so foolish as to say such

204. Is 45.12.
205. Is 41.10.
206. Or "chest," "bosom" (cf. n. 197 above).
207. Var. add "of Christ."
208. Cf. Is 53.4.
209. Is 64.6 (64.5 LXX).
210. *dokêsis,* also "suspicion," "repute."
211. Jn 9.24.

things and to open their untamed mouths against him if they had known he was God in nature.

He, however, who had been born as a man with the appearance of impurity, when he came to the end of the most wonderfully devised divine economy among us, finally ascended to the Father, and was in his bosom, and only then did he rid himself of the appearance of deadness and impurity that he had when he was with us. So he is glorified as God; he receives praise from all as Lord, as the holy of holies, as the one who illuminates creation, and who himself provides the spirits of men upon the earth[212] with the ability to overcome the one who works all impurity.

Now the Son, in the divine economy, took up human nature on our account, was born under the law,[213] and was counted with the transgressors.[214] That he then returned again to the natural honor and glory that were his originally, he himself affirms when he says to the Father in heaven, "Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with you before the world was."[215] You see that he wished to do away with those things that had intruded into creation, and was not unwilling to undergo the economy of his Incarnation, but then he hastened to the glory of the Godhead and to all-surpassing honor.

This is why the blessed Paul said, "Though we once knew Christ according to the flesh, now we know him no longer in that way."[216] For he came back to life from the dead, and ascended to the Father with his flesh. Yet, it says, we no longer know him according to the flesh, that is, no longer in flesh subject to passions, by which I mean the natural passions which are innocent of sin.[217] For before the precious cross, he is said to have hungered, to have grown weary from journeys, to have experienced sorrow, and then to have endured death itself upon a tree on our account. But now we do not know him in these

212. Var. "the spirits above and those upon the earth."
213. Cf. Gal 4.4.
214. Cf. Is 53.12; Lk 22.37.
215. Jn 17.5.
216. 2 Cor 5.16.
217. *anenklêtois,* "blameless," "without reproach."

things. For having died once, he no longer dies.[218] For Christ is incorruptible, being life by nature and the giver of life, because he shows forth the life that comes from the Father.

4. So after the miraculous performance relating to the leprous hand, God appointed a third sign that was even more powerful. For he further said, *"But if they do not believe in these two signs, or heed* [477] *your voice, take some water from the river, and pour it out on the dry ground; and the water that you take from the river will become blood on the dry ground."*[219]

Here we see again the unbelief of the Jews foretold. For they are always dull and slow to understand, and it is only with difficulty that they can be brought to the truth. For they did not believe the way in which he took on human nature, nor in the miraculous things that were performed among them. It was only after the last sign that they finally came to believe, though it was not all of them perhaps, but the remnant chosen by grace, as the blessed Paul writes.[220] And what was that last sign? It was the death of Christ upon a tree, and his immediate resurrection that followed his death.

That the death of the Savior and the great and wonderful mystery of his resurrection from the dead were given as a sign to the people of Israel is evident from the Savior's very own words. For the Pharisees once came to him after he had displayed numerous signs, and, putting on a pretense, they said, "'Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.' And he answered them, 'An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, yet no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah was in the belly of the sea monster for three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.'"[221]

Now, that the death of Emmanuel won over not only many of the Jews, but many of the Gentiles also, one can see without any difficulty. For Christ also once said, "When I am lifted up

218. Cf. Rom 6.9–10.
219. Ex 4.9.
220. Cf. Rom 11.5.
221. Mt 12.38–40.

from the earth, I will draw all to myself,"[222] and further, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."[223] Do you see how he shows us by means of a clear illustration the fruit that comes from death? The words of the Savior, therefore, show us the last sign of all, meaning that it is not only those of Israel who put their faith in him, but also, as I said, those from the other multitude, that of the Gentiles.

In what way, then, is this signified? It says, *"Take some water from the river, and pour it out on the dry ground; and the water that you take from the river will become blood on the dry ground."* Now the water is a figure, or a symbol, of life, for it is most necessary for life, and is most essential for those upon the earth. So then, as with water from a river, the Son, being born from the Father, who gives life to all things, is truly life himself. For just as he is light from light, so also is he life from life. That he did not in fact have a separate existence, but was himself of the nature of God the Father, Moses was taught, in no lesser way than we ourselves also are, for it says, *"Take some water from the river."*

Then Moses was ordered to pour out the water on the land. This is a figure of the mystery of the Incarnation. For the Only-Begotten, he who is life, being begotten and, as it were, flowing forth from the life of God the Father, was in a way mingled with humanity taken from the earth, as the water doubtlessly mixed with the soil. [480] For in Christ "all the fullness of deity dwelt bodily."[224] He joined, in effect, human nature to himself, in a way that no one would be able to understand or express.

Yet the water turned into blood. For the one who is by nature life, that is, the Word from God the Father, in the economic union, that is, with respect to the flesh, did indeed appear in complete humanity, in the nature that is ours, so as to undergo death itself. For we affirm that he died for our sakes, not suffering death in his own nature (for he himself, being life, can in no way die), but he appropriated the death of his flesh as his

222. Jn 12.32. Cyril puts "all things" (*panta*) for the original "all people" (*pantas*).

223. Jn 12.24.

224. Cf. Col 2.9.

own. Observe that if Moses had not poured out the water upon the land, it would not have turned into blood, which is clearly symbolic of his death. For considered apart from his flesh, the Word from God is life and life-giving. But when he dwelt in flesh, only then is he said to have died in the manner of men.

This is an extraordinary and manifest sign, by means of which the remnant of Israel is drawn to faith, and the multitude of the nations is also summoned. For who, on seeing death incapacitated, which was once so fearful and loathsome to those upon the earth, on seeing corruption removed, and human nature restored to the hope of unending life, would not be converted to a ready obedience? For as we died with Adam, so we have been raised with Christ. The divine Paul testifies to us of this when he writes, "For as in Adam we all die, even so in Christ we all will be made alive."[225] For he purchased us with his own blood, and counted his life to be an exchange for the life of all.

5. Now although God had performed such awesome wonders, Moses was distressed and overcome by timidity, and he did not yet feel bold about his mission. That he was to go before Pharaoh, as God commanded, and expressly declare that he should let Israel go to sacrifice to God in the desert, filled him with no end of terror. So he spoke further, confessing openly that he was lacking in words, and that he had a speech defect. He said, *"For I have never been eloquent, neither recently, nor in the past, nor since you began to speak to your servant. I stammer and am slow of speech."*[226]

Moses plainly affirmed that he was inadequate to bring about redemption from the yoke of servitude, and he said, *"Please, Lord, appoint another person, someone capable, whom you can send."*[227] And when God promised to give him the ability to speak, as he himself is the giver of wisdom and speech, Moses made further excuses, saying that he should appoint someone else who was able to do it. This displeased God, for it says, *And God was very angry with Moses, and said, "Is there not Aaron your*

225. 1 Cor 15.22.
226. Ex 4.10.
227. Ex 4.13.

brother, the Levite? I know that he will indeed speak for you."[228] Then he adds, *"He will be your mouth, and you will be to him as God."*[229]

Do you see the slowness of speech that was foreshadowed long ago by the divine Moses? For the law was not sufficiently able to utter the divine oracles, nor was it of noble or refined speech, so as to impart accurate knowledge of those things that are profitable, [481] as was indeed the case with Christ, the true Levite, of whom Aaron was the type. For the law given through Moses was barely able to deliver the rudiments of the oracles of God. It was an elementary teacher for infants, an instructor of the foolish, presenting to us through types and shadows merely the faintest knowledge of what ought to be done. While he who is truly most sufficient, our great priest who is able to carry out his mission, is Christ, who showed forth the reality set free from the shadows. For he is not slow or halting of speech, or inept with words like Moses, but he is extremely eloquent, especially as he is the Word of God the Father, the Word of wisdom.

Observe, then, how the law is inadequate for delivering those in bondage to the spiritual Pharaoh, which is Satan. See too that the divine Moses could not provide any benefit to the earth, nor indeed could he acquire the most eminent glory with respect to his virtues, unless Christ were with him helping him. You can perceive that this is so, and also that what has been said by us is true on account of its being connected to Aaron. Moses discoursed, while Aaron articulated the message clearly. For unless the law is interpreted spiritually, with Christ opening up to us the matters it contains, what is revealed will be dark and obscure to its hearers.

So then, as the Jews did not have the interpreter, which is Christ, of the things of Moses, they remained ignorant. That is why the divine Paul said, "Until this day, at the reading of the old covenant, the same veil remains un-lifted, for only in Christ is it taken away. Indeed, even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart. But when anyone turns to the Lord,

228. Ex 4.14. In the latter part the Hebrew reads, "I know that he can speak well."

229. Ex 4.16.

the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."[230]

The God of all therefore spoke truly to Moses, that teacher of sacred matters, regarding Aaron, when he said, *"he will indeed speak for you; he will be your mouth, and you will be to him as God."* Of course, we are not saying that Moses was nearer to God and more intimate with him than Emmanuel. For this one is the Son, and he is of God the Father with respect to his nature. Yet he is the one who took up residence among us, and is even spoken of as being genuinely human. He then would be considered as the one who was *"to him as God."* For Christ, as man, heeded the oracles of the law and kept the teachings of Moses. He was circumcised on the eighth day, and paid the two drachma tax, even though he was free since he was by nature a Son. He also ate the Passover, even though he himself was the true Lamb that takes away the sin of the world.[231] So this is why it is said of Moses that he would be *"to him as God."*

Moses further showed that Israel would disregard the divine signs performed by Christ, and that he would not impart faith by the miracles of themselves. And so we take the figure of Moses as representing the people of Israel, as they were called by him, and were instructed in the laws by him. Surely then, the fact that the law is inadequate to bring about redemption, and that the precious blood of Christ is sufficient for us to this purpose (for through him [484] alone has death been conquered), has most readily been made evident from these matters.

6. Now the divine Moses departed from the land of the Midianites, taking his wife and children, and eventually came to Egypt, so fulfilling precisely what God had instructed him to do.

When he was still a short distance from the land of the Egyptians, the God of all said to him, *"When you go back to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders that I have put in your power."*[232] And next he said, *"You shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord: Israel is my firstborn son. I said to you, "Let my people go that*

230. 2 Cor 3.14–17.
231. Cf. Jn 1.29.
232. Ex 4.21.

they may serve me," but you were not willing to let them go. See then, I will slay your firstborn son.'"[233] Then it says, *And it happened that an angel of the Lord met Moses in his lodging on the way,*[234] *and sought to kill him. So taking a stone, Zipporah cut off the uncircumcised flesh of her son, and she fell at his feet, and said, "The blood of the circumcision of my son has been stopped." Then the angel left her, because she said, "The blood of the circumcision of my son has been stopped."*[235]

Now an angel came in our form and sought to kill Moses, but he was just about thwarted when Zipporah circumcised her son, Gershom, who was also the firstborn, and whose name means "sojourner." Why the destroyer tried to kill Moses the sacred Scripture does not explicitly state, but it is only by this circumcision of the child that he was prepared to be made to leave. So the figure again makes it clear how death was conquered by the blood of Christ, and so the holy multitude of the fathers, or rather the whole of the race that was there from the beginning before Christ, has been saved. For he died for all, and the death of all has been undone in him. For it was not by the blood of the prophets, but by the blood of the much younger[236] Christ, that we escape the Destroyer together with him. "For to this end," it says, "Christ died and came to life: that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living."[237]

If it said, however, that the destroyer attacked Gershom, rather than the blessed Moses, you would not understand this. For it is not by means of circumcision according to the law, that is, physical circumcision of the flesh, that death is banished, but through the circumcision that takes place in Christ, through the Spirit. This he enacts upon his new people, the firstborn, who are indeed a "sojourner" upon the earth, and yet are enrolled for the heavenly life above, and whom the spiritu-

233. Ex 4.22–23. Cyril's reading here differs from that preserved in the LXX known to us today, in which these last two clauses appear with a conditional sense: "but if you are not willing to let them go, see I will slay your firstborn son."

234. Var. omit "on the way."

235. Ex 4.24–26. At the beginning of v. 26, instead of the words "left her," the LXX has "left him."

236. Or "more recent."

237. Rom 14.9.

al Zipporah, that is, the church, she who is of Midian and the Gentiles, circumcised with a stone. This stone is a figure of the Spirit, since it is very strong and indestructible, as well as being made from rock. For it is the Spirit of Christ, and Christ was a rock, as the wise Paul wrote.[238]

One also ought to be aware that Joshua, who was born sometime after Moses, circumcised the men of Israel with stone knives, portraying to us in a figure the circumcision without hands enacted in Christ, by which death is defeated. This is [485] the spiritual circumcision of evil, the putting off of base lusts. For with regard to the circumcision according to the flesh, the divine Paul wrote, "Circumcision is nothing."[239] And the words that he declared to us are wise and sacred, when he said, "You have been circumcised in Christ,"[240] through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

238. Cf. 1 Cor 10.4.
239. 1 Cor 7.19.
240. Cf. Col 2.11.

BOOK TEN: EXODUS, PART 3

Concerning the rock that was struck

ENTER THROUGH the narrow gate," Christ declared to his friends.[1] In describing this ongoing[2] situation, he calls the entrance a gate that is "narrow" and "hard," and he speaks of that worthy perseverance which is beyond all account, through which those who wish to be able to set their minds on the things above are most especially distinguished, and are made glorious through the training that leads to well-being[3] and virtuousness. For as valor is displayed in battles and testifies to the manliness of the one serving[4] as a soldier, so the one who is strong and noble, that is, able to produce the virtuousness that is pleasing to God, the one who is illustrious, eminent, and worthy of all commendation, is especially well displayed as having the ability to endure the difficulties that arise from undergoing trials. And so the disciple of the Savior affirmed that such a person should be admired in every way, saying, "Blessed is the person who perseveres under trial; for when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life."[5] And those who lacked the strength to do this, and who have yet gained such eminent glory, say, "You have tested us, O God; you have refined us with fire as silver is refined. You laid afflictions upon our backs; you set men upon our heads. We went through

1. Mt 7.13–14.
2. Or "miserable."
3. Or "goodness of soul."
4. Var. add "well."
5. Jas 1.12.

fire and water, but you brought us to a place of respite."[6] For hardship ends in rejoicing, and afflictions open up the straight way for those who nobly strive to enter.

While God, the one with knowledge of hidden things, knows everything before it comes into being (for to him "everything is naked and exposed"),[7] he nevertheless waits for the outcome of the deeds and strength of those who undergo trial at some time. This is so that they might not only appear to him as worthy of honor with respect to his foreknowledge, but that having shown much valor, and their virtue having been witnessed through their actual deeds, they might be applauded by both angels and men. This is why the blessed Paul said concerning himself and the other saints, who had contended well and conquered, [488] "They have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men."[8]

Now Israel was tested in many ways, so that their debilitating weakness might be manifest, and that God might be admired for his great goodness in that he endured those who do wrong, and more so in that the mystery[9] was portrayed to us in shadows in connection with each of the things that happened.

So, having just completed our discussion relating to the quails and the manna, we have shown that Israel was suffering greatly from infirmity and the love of pleasure. And we see that it is not long before they are once again found to be agitating. For this is what is written: *All the congregation of Israel departed from the Desert of Zin by their encampments, through the word of the Lord, and they made camp at Rephidim. But there was no water for the people to drink. Then the people spoke evil of Moses, saying, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you speak evil of me? And why do you put the Lord to the test?" So the people thirsted for water in that place, and grumbled against Moses, saying, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to kill us, our children, and our animals with thirst?" Then Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They will stone me at any moment." And the*

6. Ps 66.10–12 (65.10–12 LXX).
7. Cf. Heb 4.13.
8. 1 Cor 4.9.
9. Var. add "of Christ."

Lord said to Moses, "Pass before this people, and take with you some of the elders of the people; take the staff in your hand with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I stand there before you come, upon the rock at Horeb. And you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people shall drink." So Moses did this before the people of Israel. He called the name of that place "Testing" and "Speaking Evil,"[10] *because the people of Israel spoke evil, and because they put the Lord to the test, saying, "Is the Lord among us, or not?"*[11]

This is what the divine oracle says to us in Exodus, while in Numbers it presents a more extensive account, which I think is also necessary to set down, since by making a good and thorough examination of each of them, we shall acquire ample knowledge of the events that happened long ago as figures[12] and, more than this, a knowledge of the beauty of the matters to be contemplated spiritually.

So it is written: "And the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came to the Wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. There Miriam died, and she was buried there. Now there was no water for the congregation, and they gathered against Moses and Aaron. The people spoke evil of Moses, saying, 'Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the Lord! Why have you[13] brought the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness to kill us and our children?[14] And why have you led us up out of Egypt that we should come into this evil place, a place that is not sown, nor are there figs, or vines, or pomegranates, nor is there water to drink?' Then Moses and Aaron went from before the congregation to the door [489] of the tent of testimony. They fell upon their faces, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother. And you shall speak to the rock in their presence, and it will give

10. In Hebrew Massah ("testing") and Meribah ("contention").

11. Ex 17.1–7.

12. *tupikôs,* that is to say, in the form of types.

13. The second person "you" here is singular in Cyril, but plural in the original Hebrew and LXX, whereas the verb of the immediately following question ("why have you led us up . . .") is plural in all three texts.

14. LXX: "and our cattle" (as MT).

forth its waters. So you shall bring forth water for them out of the rock, and you shall provide drink for the congregation and their cattle.' Then Moses took the staff which was before the Lord, as the Lord commanded, and Moses and Aaron assembled the congregation before the rock. He said to them, 'Listen to me, you rebels; shall we bring you water out of this rock?' Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with the staff. Water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their cattle drank. Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'Because you did not believe me, to show me holy before the people of Israel, therefore you will not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.' This is the water of strife, because the people of Israel spoke evil before the Lord, and he proved himself holy among them."[15]

The people were indeed going through a dry land, traversing a region greatly lacking in water, and they were making much of the hardships of the journey. In a short time there occurred some of the usual grief, and they raised an insufferable outcry against Moses and Aaron. Although they had been spectators of so many wonderful miracles, and through the trial itself had well learned of the surpassing excellence of the divine power, they still feared that God might somehow be unable to administer to them the necessities of life, to provide them with food and to produce supplies of water everywhere they went. Their cravenness got the better of them, since their thinking was childish and unmanly, and as a little something had happened to distress them, they immediately rushed at their leader,[16] and cried out in a profane manner, for he was indeed their mediator also, and through him they had been called to freedom.

They regarded as blessed those who had perished earlier when they were in the grip of cravenness, overcome by the desire for the meat of Egypt, and having at that time devoured the quails that brought ruin upon them, they had been condemned to death. That is why these others said, "Would that we had died when our brothers perished before the Lord! Why

15. Nm 20.1–13.
16. Greek, *paidagôgô*.

did you bring us[17] up into this wilderness to kill us and our cattle?" O what a feeble mind, what wretched thinking, and what a mind given to much despair! They quickly came to long after the dreadful things of Egypt as though they were better than the things of God. The former bitter yoke of slavery was now sweet; no longer was it intolerable, nor was Pharaoh harsh. The clay bricks were not hateful, nor was the cruelty of the taskmasters, but everything now seemed pleasant. For it was the feeble state of their minds that enticed them to fall into this folly.

Now hear, as seems appropriate, the accusations made against Moses, the mediator, for they said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt that we should come into this evil place, a place that is not sown, [492] nor are there figs, or vines, or pomegranates, nor is there water to drink?" Note how they are carried away into cravenness, and were unrestrainedly inclined to temporal pleasures. They applied themselves to worldly delights, and were concerned to satisfy their stomachs. They despised the hope, and did not take possession of the land promised to the fathers, not understanding that it is always the case that hardships procure the choicest gifts. For it is not without difficulty that one may acquire the most excellent gifts.

Israel, therefore, did not know how to act nobly,[18] nor how to withstand rigorously the assaults of the passions, since this was not reserved for those under the law, but it was rather prearranged for those in Christ. Although, however, they deserved the indignation of God and were not worthy that he should supply them with water, and even though they had descended to such a level of perverseness, in order that they might yet benefit in the matter of faith by other miracles, God commanded Moses to strike the rock with the staff.

But God was not unaware that Moses himself would soon be made fainthearted by the rebelliousness of the people and would stumble in the matter of faith. Therefore in Exodus it says, *"Take with you some of the elders of the people; take the staff in your hand with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I stand there before you come, upon the rock at Horeb. And you shall strike the rock,*

17. Var. "the congregation of the Lord"; as Nm 20.4.
18. Var. "act creditably."

and water will come out of it, and let my people drink." In Numbers, however, it says, "Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother. And speak to the rock in their presence, and it will give forth its waters for them. So you shall bring forth water for them out of the rock, and you shall provide drink for the congregation."

Observe that he strengthens Moses's faith by reminding him of the wonders performed in Egypt, saying, *"Take the staff in your hand with which you struck the river."* It is as though he were saying, "The staff which turned the great river into blood by the ineffable power of the God who accomplishes such things will very easily bring water even from the rock." Then he affirms this in another manner, adding, *"Behold, I stand there."* For "you will not be alone," he says, "nor will you again be the one to perform the miracle. But I myself will indicate the rock which is to be the source of many streams of water. I will make the prior preparations for the miracle, and I will wait for your help. Speak to the rock, and I myself will be the power in your words." Even though, however, it was necessary to embolden him by saying such things, Moses was weak. He said, "Listen to me, you rebels; shall we bring you water out of this rock?" Then he struck the rough piece of rock twice with the staff, for nothing of what was expected to happen would come to pass unless the rock happened to be struck. He struck it twice, even though some elements in Egypt were changed into blood by stretching forth the staff just once.

Nevertheless, even though he was greatly angered by these events, God gave the spring of water, so that weakness might not be ascribed to him in the apprehension of the people, who lacked understanding. But Moses was rebuked. It says, "You will not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them, because you did not believe me, to show me holy before the people of Israel."

Let us now come once more and refashion the form of the literal sense into that of the mystery of Christ. [493] And as we work our way through the divine Scriptures, let us speak of those things that are appropriate, making every effort that the direction of our interpretation be guided by the sacred writings.

2. So in the first month after Miriam had died, the people were thirsty. Then, when God commanded him, the divine Moses struck the rock with the staff, while the elders of the people were present with him, and Aaron also. They spoke to the rock, and the spring of water poured forth abundantly. So Moses provided drink for the congregation and for their cattle, as it is written.

What may we say, then, is represented figuratively by the death of Miriam, or how is she actually to be interpreted? And why was it necessary to give an explanation saying that she died in the first month? We shall, then, take Moses as representing the law, and Aaron the priesthood, while to the person of Miriam we shall assign the role of the ministration under the law. So God said through the holy man to the unrestrained Jerusalem, "I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam."[19] Do you see who is placed alongside Moses and Aaron in the leadership of Israel? With the all-wise Moses serving as mediator, and Aaron being the one who presided, that is to say, who had the honor to serve as priest under the ministration expressed in types, Israel according to the flesh then benefited in the service offered to God.[20] But that the role of Miriam must be added alongside that of Moses and Aaron is very readily understood from what happened at the Red Sea. When Pharaoh perished with his bodyguard and drowned with all his army, Moses sang the song of thanksgiving and composed the hymn of praise. Then the women went out dancing, and Miriam took her timbrel, as it is written,[21] making, one may suppose, a loud and clear sound with her companions. Yet this was a detailed[22] figure, expressed in types, of the true matter for contemplation. For the manner of the song and the sound of timbrels indicated the fact that Moses himself, representing the law, and Miriam also with him, representing the ministration of types and shadows, both declare the marvelous and most admirable power of the God who has dominion over all. Surely then, one may

19. Mi 6.4.
20. Var. "from their relationship with God."
21. Ex 15.20.
22. Or "subtle."

confer upon Miriam the role of the ministration under the law, just as we may surely confer upon Moses the role of the law itself, and upon Aaron that of the priesthood.

Now when Miriam died in the first month, that is, at the beginning of the year according to the laws of the Hebrews, when the mystery of the holy Passover also takes place, the people were thirsty. For in the first month of the year, which is also called the month of new things, the ministration of types and shadows in effect died, was gathered in,[23] and was removed from the midst. How was this so? Because the Only-Begotten Word of God in human form shined forth his light upon us, as though it were the month of new things. This is why he said, "I myself am the one speaking: 'Here I am, how beautiful on the mountains,'"[24] as in the month of new things.[25] He summoned the church out of the nations, saying this: "Rise up, come, my companion, my fair one, my dove. For behold, the winter has passed, the rains are over and gone. The flowers have appeared in our land; [496] the time of pruning has arrived."[26] For in Christ we have blossomed up into newness of life, and the time of his advent is shown forth to us as the spiritual springtime, when he makes human nature to bloom and be fruitful.

For at that time, the time when the ministration of shadows was gathered in, as when Miriam died, the people were thirsty and were in lack of spiritual water. Yet the streams of Christ flowed forth abundantly, by which I mean the oracles given through him and the mystical instruction in spirit and in truth. The divine Paul understood this and wrote, "I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of the fact that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses, in the cloud and in the sea. All ate the same spiritual food, and drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed, and that rock

23. Or "wrapped up," as, for instance, a dead body in a shroud.

24. Is 52.6–7.

25. It is not clear where Cyril intends the citation to end. The Latin column in PG 69 also places this last clause in quotation marks. The Isaianic text, however, certainly does not continue in this way. If this clause is derived from another biblical text, the source remains unidentifiable.

26. Song 2.10–12.

was Christ."[27] He is compared to a rock because he is indestructible and unmovable, for the divine and supreme Being stands firm in his own virtues.[28]

Now it is necessary to examine the manner in which the water was given. For when the elders of the law had assembled, and Aaron too was present, words were spoken to the rock. But Moses also struck it twice. So too, when the elders of the people and the priests gathered together, those instructed in the law, that is, the Israel that had been represented by the person of Moses, they spoke against Christ, accusing him before Pilate, and they cried out profanely, "Away with him, away with him! Crucify him!"[29] And then they struck out with two blows. For they killed the Prince of Life, and secondly, they added to the first blow in that they also wished to be assured that he remained among the dead. Yet Christ in fact came back to life, having trampled down death. So when the soldiers who had been posted by them to guard the tomb came and told them this, they frantically charged them to say that the disciples had secretly stolen him, so explaining away the wonderful mystery of the resurrection. There was, then, this second blow.

Yet the rock gave abundant streams of water. Although Israel did in fact mistreat Christ, he still provided drink for the whole synagogue, and flooded the world with sacred and divine springs. For thus he promised to give us himself, saying through the prophet, "Behold, I will turn to them as a river of peace, and as a torrent that deluges them with the glory of the nations."[30] David also sings, "The flowing of the river makes glad the city of God."[31] And he likewise says to God the heavenly Father himself, "How you have multiplied your mercy, O God! The sons of men will have hope in the shelter of your wings. They will drink from the abundance of your house, and you will give them drink from the river of your delights, for with you is the fountain of life."[32]

27. 1 Cor 10.1–4.
28. Lit. "good things."
29. Jn 19.15.
30. Is 66.12.
31. Ps 46.4 (45.5 LXX).
32. Ps 36.7–9 (35.9–10 LXX).

Note how when their unbelief comes rushing in, Moses strikes the rock with the staff. For when Israel refused to believe in Christ, [497] they acted badly. So Moses was rebuked, and Aaron with him also. It says, "You will not bring the people of Israel into the land which I have given them." So it is not the law consisting of types that will lead us into the inheritance of the saints, into the true[33] land of promise, nor is it the priesthood under the law, which lay weak in shadows. For we shall not please God through offerings of blood, nor shall we appear beautiful to him if ours is an earthly glory. Rather, we shall enter into the heavenly city, and come into the inheritance of the fathers, with Christ as our leader, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the descent of God upon Mount Sinai, and Israel before the mountain

1. To the multitude of the Jews who did not accept redemption by faith, but who rather greatly despised the value of his oracles, believing that the law given through Moses would suffice them as the only way of having a relationship with God, our Lord Jesus Christ declared, "No one comes to the Father except through me,"[34] and also, "I am the way,"[35] and "I am the door."[36] When he says these things he is most certainly not speaking falsely, since he is the truth. And God the Father can be approached in no other way except through the one who is the only Son by nature. For he who knows the Son will as a matter of course know the Father also from whom he came forth. Therefore, he said to those who chose not to believe in him, who claimed to know the God of all, "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."[37]

33. *alethesteran*, is a comparative form, meaning "truer," "more genuine," "more real."

34. Jn 14.6.

35. Ibid.

36. Jn 10.9.

37. Jn 8.19.

Now Moses in fact was a tutor to those of former times; he was a mediator and guide, an emissary bringing laws from God. He was noble indeed among the saints, for he heard God expressly telling him, "I know you above all others, and you have found favor with me."[38] Yet the law was weak, not being of such a nature so as fully to effect a relationship with God. This we rather obtain through the mediatorship of Christ, for "he himself is our peace," as the Scriptures say.[39] In him alone is there perfection of knowledge and every good gift, and it is he who through his own self, in effect, has brought us to the Father. Therefore, he said, "I desire that as you and I are one, they also might be one in us."[40]

Moses, then, was indeed a mediator, yet he was so as a type and a shadow. The real mediator is Christ, to whom we are firmly joined, since it is true that he came down into our estate and became a man, so that we ourselves "might become partakers of his divine nature,"[41] being united to him by sharing in the Holy Spirit and by the grace of God.

We shall learn further about this if we turn the eyes of our minds to the sacred Scriptures. For it says, *The Lord said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes, and let them be ready by the third day. For on the third day the Lord will descend on Mount Sinai before all the people. You shall make the people stand apart on all sides, and say, 'Be careful that you do not go up into the mountain, nor touch any part of it. Everyone who touches the mountain shall surely die. No person's hand shall touch it, for he will be stoned with stones, or shot with an arrow;* [500] *whether man or beast, he shall not live. When the sounds and the trumpets and the cloud depart from the mountain, they shall come up on the mountain.'"*[42]

For when the people of Israel were laboring in Egypt and had lapsed into the false worship of the Egyptians, they worshiped objects of human invention, and things made of stone;

38. Ex 33.12.
39. Eph 2.14.
40. Cf. Jn 10.30; 17.21.
41. 2 Pt 1.4.
42. Ex 19.10–13.

that is to say, they offered worship to things of different materials. They were suffering from that pitiable error about which the prophet said, "They say to a piece of wood, 'You are my God,' and to a stone, 'You gave me birth.'"[43] It was necessarily the case then, as the Maker wished to bring them out of that former profane and false worship to a knowledge of the truth, in order that it might not seem that they were being deceived by the words of Moses to worship a God who did not exist, that he should deem it fit and helpful for them to receive the divine revelations in images also. For things that are seen tend to be apprised with a stronger faith. He therefore promised to come down visibly in the near future.

So, in order that the people might understand what a privilege it was to be invited to this event, in which they would become hearers and spectators of God, that is to say, of his divine and ineffable glory, it was absolutely necessary for him to require their most stringent purification. It was fitting for them to be free from fleshly uncleanness and to be properly dressed for this occasion, so that the way the festal gathering was held might be correct and appropriate. For a wondrous festal occasion is truly to be deemed worthy of such manifest consideration.[44] He further ordered them to be pure, and to abstain from relations with women, and for them to exercise self-control in readiness for the third day. He also instructed them to wash their clothes.

When these preparations were completed, *On the third day*, it says, *when morning came, there were thunders and lightnings, and dark clouds upon Mount Sinai. There was the loud sound of a trumpet, and all the people in the camp were terrified. Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was completely covered in smoke because God had descended upon it in fire, and the smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace. All the people were absolutely astounded. And as the sound of the trumpet was getting louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him with a voice.*[45]

43. Jer 2.27. Cyril replaces Jeremiah's "You are my father" with "You are my God" from Is 44.17.

44. Var. "honor."

45. Ex 19.16–19.

Now the supreme Being who dwells on high, the one who transcends all that is created, is in fact scarcely perceived by the mind. So when, to Israel's benefit, he came to enact the matter of divine revelation through things that were more visible, it was thereupon necessary that the character of that economy should include many elements that inspired fear. For *thunders and lightnings* issued forth together, and dark clouds gathered, so that even the creation appeared to be serving the God of all, the darkness also acting as his servant.

Thus Moses brought Israel out trembling, and they stood by the mountain. One might suppose he had previously instructed them that they should suffer no harm, but would rather encounter the good and beneficent Master. As the mountain was on fire, smoke [501] was spreading out directly over it, and there was the shrill sound of a trumpet, thin at first, but soon building up to a fuller and stronger sound. Then the God of all came down with the appearance of fire upon Mount Sinai. *And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up, and the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, and warn the people so that they do not at any time come near to God to look, and many of them fall. And let the priests who draw near to the Lord God consecrate themselves, lest the Lord destroy them." Then Moses said to God, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set bounds for the mountain and consecrate it.'" So the Lord said to him, "Go down, and come back up with Aaron; but do not let the priests and the people come up to God lest the Lord destroy some of them."*[46]

God commanded that only the mediator, Moses, should go up the mountain, but he did not let any of the others come up. The mountain is shown to be inaccessible to them, and he threatened death should anyone care to slight his command. He was not intending to be perceived as cruel or harsh, or as unapproachable, for to think such would be quite absurd. Rather, it was in order that they might know and understand that although God is utterly transcendent and supremely eminent, they were able to be near to his glory and dignity.

There is also another reason for this. For the Israelites had been brought up on the practices of the Egyptians and had

46. Ex 19.20–24.

learned that access to the shrines of unclean demons[47] was not in fact allowed to those who wanted, but that this was only permitted to those who had been chosen and been purified, one may suppose, according to the laws that existed among them, by taking part in secret revelries. It would thus be most untoward that the Israelites should then consider it nothing to draw near to the God of all, and to cast their eyes upon such grand and hallowed places in which his divine and ineffable glory appeared.

Yet there is something else here, for I would say that we ought to seek diligently for what is profitable in a number of ways. It cannot have been the case that equal honor should be granted by God to both people and leader, to the one who was to serve as tutor, the minister of the law to whom the laws were given, and to those under his authority. On the contrary, it was better and wise to allot the honor to him in a special way, and this was most beneficial for those placed under him. That what I am saying is true, you can understand from elsewhere. For the Master of all said to Moses, the expounder of mysteries, *"Behold, I am coming to you in a pillar of cloud, so that you may hear*[48] *me speaking to you, and that they may believe you ever after."*[49] Everything, then, was enacted prudently and in order.

2. As I said, however, there was in the earliest times a certain shadowy portrayal of the visitation of our Savior, who would come to illumine those upon the earth on the third day, in the last period of time, as it were, in which the Word became flesh and shone upon us, in accordance with the Scriptures, and who proclaimed ahead of time[50] the eventual cleansing to be attained by him and through him for those who believe. For it says, *"Warn the people, and let them be ready by the third day. For on the third day the Lord will descend upon Mount Sinai."*

Now what the manner of preparation was Moses explained, [504] saying, *"For three days do not draw near to a woman,"*[51] and

47. That is to say, the gods of Egypt.

48. Cyril's citation errs at this point. It ought to read: "so that the people may hear me speaking to you."

49. Ex 19.9.

50. Var. add "through the law."

51. Ex 19.15.

he also distinctly affirmed that even their clothes were to be washed. When it says that they should not sleep with women but should cease relations with them, the mortification of the pleasures of the flesh is especially well signified. And when it says that they were to wash their clothes, cleansing through water is being portrayed to us, and it is evident that this indicates the removal of defilement through the Spirit. For, as the blessed Paul writes, those who choose to set their minds on the things of Christ, and who walk in the Spirit, "have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires,"[52] and they "put to death the members of their earthly nature: sexual immorality, uncleanness, passion, and evil desire."[53] They considered the gracious gift from above, namely Emmanuel himself, to be like splendid clothes, for "Clothe yourselves," it says, "with our Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its lusts."[54]

So Moses commanded the people of that time to do these things. And we ourselves have also heard the law declaring in a figurative manner what is pleasing to Christ[55]—both the cleansing through water and the putting to death of fleshly desires. For the law decreed that those who were defiled should be sprinkled with water for the purification of the flesh, and that a person suffering from a sexually transmitted disease should be sent out of the camp as one who is unclean, so disdaining, I suppose, the lack of restraint and showing the profaneness of fleshly pleasure. So too, we who have been justified in Christ and sanctified through the Spirit have been commanded to hate even the garment defiled by the flesh.[56] The law, then, makes advance preparations, and declares beforehand the excellence of the gifts to be given through Christ, though this was still by means of earthy figures.

Let us then consider, as it seems appropriate, the manner

52. Gal 5.24.

53. Col 3.5.

54. Rom 13.14; here correcting *porneian* ("sexual immorality") to *pronoian* ("provision").

55. The words "to Christ" have been added from the Harleian Codex.

56. Cf. Jude 23.

of the divine manifestation. *On the third day,* it says, *when morning came, there were thunders and lightnings, and a dark cloud upon Mount Sinai. There was the loud sound of a trumpet.* For the Only-Begotten, as I said, made his visitation and came down from heaven not in the first period of time, at the beginning of this world; nor was it in the second, middle period of time, but it was in the third and final age. And it was in the morning, as it were, and at the beginning of the day, that is to say, when the spiritual gloom that exists within us was driven away, as when the night is driven away and the darkness disappears. For the one who, by means of deceit and oppression, is taken to be the god of this world had spiritually darkened the whole earth, leading it into the error of polytheism and into every kind of impurity. Yet the God and Lord of all, that is, Christ, shone upon us, and showed us the much-longed-for day, concerning which the divine David spoke when he said, "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."[57] In one passage the most-wise Paul also wrote, "The night is far gone, and the day is near,"[58] and again elsewhere, "We are not of the night, nor of darkness, but we are children of light, and children of the day."[59] Accordingly, it was as though it were in the morning [505] and on the third day when the Only-Begotten descended.

Now there were *lightnings* upon Mount Sinai, and *a dark cloud.* Lightning is a figure of the divine light and of spiritual radiance, meaning that of the Spirit, which through Christ illumines all things and spreads all over the earth. For the prophet, in speaking to Christ, the God and Savior of all, declared, "Your lightning lit up the world."[60] We are not saying, of course, that mention is being made of the lightning that comes with the rain, but, as I said just now, the intention is to signify the shining forth of spiritual[61] light under the name of "lightning."

The darkness would indicate that the mystery of Christ

57. Ps 118.24 (117.24 LXX).
58. Rom 13.12.
59. 1 Thes 5.5.
60. Ps 77.18 (76.19 LXX).
61. Var. add "and divine."

is truly difficult to behold. The blessed David himself understood this to be so, I believe, when he proclaimed, "He made darkness his hiding place; around him was his tabernacle, dark water in the clouds of the air; the clouds passed over the brightness that was before him."[62] Thus the mystery of Christ is hidden, so that instruction from above is needed, and a revelation from God. Peter, for sure, understood this especially well, perceiving the Word to be God come in the flesh and to be truly the Son. "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah," Christ says, "because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."[63] Paul too affirmed that the mystery had been made known to him through a revelation of God.[64] It is doubtless the case, then, that the darkness indicates obscure knowledge.

Now the trumpet sounded forth, proclaiming the tuneful sound of the gospel revelations. So God said to the people of the Jews through the prophets, "I set watchmen over you, who said, 'Hear the sound of the trumpet.' But they said, 'We will not hear it.' Therefore, the nations heard, and those that tended their flocks among them. Hear, O earth! Behold, I am bringing disasters upon this people, the fruit of their rebellion; because they have not given heed to my word, and they have rejected my law."[65] For the trumpet sounded forth among them through the watchmen sent by God, that is, the holy apostles, who were appointed as watchmen over us. But the people said, "We will not hear it." Therefore the nations have heard. So we find the holy disciples expressly saying to the people of the Jews, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first. But since you reject it, and do not judge yourselves worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles, for so the Lord has commanded us."[66] The blessed Isaiah too, when speaking about the time of Christ's advent, compares to a trumpet the clear sound given through the proclamation of Christ. He says,

62. Ps 18.11–12 (17.12–13 LXX).
63. Mt 16.17.
64. Cf. Gal 1.12.
65. Jer 6.17–19.
66. Acts 14.46–47.

"And it shall come to pass in that day that they will blow the great trumpet."[67] The law indeed was also a trumpet, but it was weak-sounding and indistinct,[68] as was Moses, for it just sounded forth in Judea only, in which God became known.[69] But the great trumpet, Christ, or the proclamation of him, [508] sounds forth throughout the earth, for he said, "This gospel[70] will be proclaimed in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations."[71] And the outcome of the matter testifies that the message is true,[72] for nobody remains among us who has not heard of the glory of our Savior.

And Moses, it says, *led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood by Mount Sinai.* Note the instruction given by Moses, for he brings them to God. He[73] gives instruction with respect to Christ, and makes those instructed by him to stand for a while by the mountain,[74] though he does not take them up it. Here we understand the mountain to be the extraordinary and exalted knowledge of the mystery pertaining to Christ. For it is exceedingly high and not at all accessible to those under the law, but rather is clearly seen by us who have been sanctified by the Spirit. As the Savior himself said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given,"[75] speaking of the Jews. Also, addressing words to God the Father in the form of a prayer on our behalf, he said, "I praise you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden all these things from the wise and intelligent, and you have revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for this was pleasing in your sight."[76] Moses, then, stood them

67. Is 27.13.

68. The two adjectives here are the same as those occurring in Ex 4.10 describing the speech of Moses.

69. Cf. Ps 76.1 (75.2 LXX).

70. Var. add "of the kingdom."

71. Mt 24.14.

72. *atrekês,* "accurate," "sure."

73. Var. "The law."

74. Var. "and presents to him those made ready for faith and who understand the things expressed in types, and he makes them stand for a while under him [or 'it']."

75. Mt 13.11.

76. Mt 11.25–26.

by the mountain, but did not take the people up it. For, as I just said, we obtain the height and perfection of wisdom and knowledge through Christ, and not through Moses. For Moses was indeed a servant and an instructor, but Christ, being the Lord of all, came as the giver of perfect knowledge. For in him "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," as it is written.[77]

When God came down with the appearance of fire, there was smoke, like that issuing forth from a furnace, which spread out extensively from above and which, I imagine, completely enveloped the people. For the Word of God for our sake came down to us from heaven like "the fire of a furnace," as the prophet says.[78] And it was he who baptized us in the Holy Spirit and with fire, with a spiritual fire that consumes what is base within us, and which melts the filthiness of sin, and which does not permit our minds to remain cold[79] with respect to inordinate pleasures, but rather by this means we are perfected, being aflame[80] in spirit. And this very thing Christ performed in us. That is why he said, "I came to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!"[81]

So then, by way of accommodation he appeared to those of old in the form of fire, though it was not without smoke. By this we should understand that it is necessary that those who lapse into a careless state, and who choose to despise his divine glory, should lament and wail. For in smoke one is made to shed tears. How can it be doubted that those who hate God and sin against him will depart into the outer darkness? For "in that place," it says, "there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."[82] The smoke indicates, then, that those concerning whom we are speaking shed bitter tears at their wantonness. [509]

It then added that the sound of the trumpet increased, becoming much louder. At first just a few people could hear it, but

77. Col 2.3.
78. Mal 3.2.
79. This idiom would seem to have the sense of "be faint or inactive."
80. *zeontes,* "boiling," "being zealous," "fervent"; cf. Rom 12.11.
81. Lk 12.49.
82. Mt 8.12.

after a while many heard, the whole assembly in fact. For the proclamation of the gospel is indeed a loud-sounding trumpet, giving a piercing sound, as stated above. But at first, it says,[83] it was heard only in Judea. With the passing of time, however, the divine disciples went throughout every place on earth, preaching everywhere, so that from Jerusalem to Illyricum,[84] or rather to the ends of the earth, and from sunrise to sunset, the sacred trumpet sounded forth. This, I believe, is what is meant by the sound of the trumpet becoming louder.

After this, God commanded the blessed Moses to warn the people, *"so that they do not at any time come near to God to look, and many of them fall. And let the priests who draw near to the Lord God consecrate themselves, lest the Lord destroy them."* Take careful note, then, from these matters also, how it is impossible to draw near to God through the tutorship of Moses. For God does not accept those who still wish to be distinguished on the basis of types and shadows, because such things belong to Moses. Rather, he seeks the beauty of the truth within us. And Christ is the truth, through whom we have access and come near to the Father, like going up a mountain, and through whom we have knowledge of him. For if we know the Son, through him and in him we also know the Father. So then, it is through Christ that we have access, not through Moses, that is to say, not through the law.

Now the fact that they were to be sanctified distinctly foreshows that the priesthood under the law was not yet completely holy, for it was still in need of sanctification, and it was for this very reason that he commanded them to be sanctified. But Christ is a blameless and most holy high priest over us, and the guarantee of a better covenant, as Paul says.[85] That is why the first covenant came to an end. There was also a change of the priesthood itself, since it did not have one that was without fault and perfectly holy. For it made nobody perfect with regard to the conscience,[86] but rather it presented instruction

83. See n. 69 above.
84. Cf. Rom 15.19.
85. Cf. Heb 7.22.
86. Cf. Heb 9.9.

about baptisms, sprinkling with water for the cleansing of the flesh. For the priesthood according to the law stopped short of being wholly effective for sanctification. Yet, though this lacked perfect holiness, seeing that in the priesthood later to be consecrated in Christ the types would be transformed into reality, God commanded the people to be sanctified.

When he added, *"lest the Lord destroy them,"* he indicated that, once the priesthood that comes through Christ is shown forth in the world, the punishment for those who revere the priesthood under the law was death. It is through Christ that both the Gentiles and the ancient, noble, and holy race itself are sanctified, but that which has not been sanctified by him is wholly profane and remains in a state of impurity. For this reason he said to the people of the Jews, "Truly, truly, I say to you, if you do not believe that I am he, you will die in your sins."[87]

Since, however, the people of Israel had become unrestrained, that they would eventually be sent away and would not turn to God in any other way [512] except through Christ, is readily shown when God providentially says to the most noble Moses, *"Go down, and come back up with Aaron."* See how Moses was sent away, and then does not return alone, but he goes up again accompanied by Aaron, who was a type of Christ the great priest. For it is through him, as I said, that the Father may be approached. And although those under the law, the people of Israel, were eventually sent away, in the latter times they will recognize the holy and innocent high priest,[88] which is Christ, and through him they will come to God the Father. It is as though their ascending into the mountain were a great and glorious mystery of the economy in which Christ has saved us all, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

87. Jn 8.24.
88. Cf. Heb 7.26.

Concerning the ascent of Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of the people[89] *into the mountain*

1. So the people of Israel were summoned to God through the law, with Moses then acting as a servant and mediator. As the divine Paul writes, however, "The law made nobody perfect."[90] Indeed, Christ is to be understood as the perfection[91] of the law and the prophets. For through him there comes a total redemption, since "there is no other name under heaven among men, by which we must be saved,"[92] and in him there is total perfection through sanctification in the Spirit. Through him we have been summoned to the Father, and with him we shall ascend into the heavenly city. And therefore he expressly said, "In my Father's house there are many dwellings; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also."[93] For he entered into heaven as the first representative, a kind of firstfruits, of humanity. And that he will take us up there also one should not doubt, for he who does not know how to lie confirmed this, so giving a greater hope to those worthy to obtain it. For we will one day be citizens of heaven, since Christ has gone back there ahead of us, as I said. And the most-wise Paul gave us assurance of the truth of this matter when he wrote, "For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf."[94] For he was, and is, and will be God, sharing in the divine nature with his Father, and having the likeness of the one who has begotten him. But he was manifest for our sakes, for he became a man so that we who had been cast out from the presence of the Father because of Adam's transgression, and who had suffered the tyranny of our

89. Var. omit "of the people."

90. Heb 7.19; Cyril puts "nobody" (*oudena*) in the place of the original "nothing" (*ouden*).

91. Var. "the end."

92. Acts 4.12.

93. Jn 14.2–3.

94. Heb 9.24.

sin, might come once again into his presence through Christ[95] and into our original state, while those things that caused the separation are completely annulled.

So in Christ we have been called to the heavenly city, and we have been made worthy of the attention of God the Father. And through Christ and in him we have been taught to worship God the Father, the Creator of all. And the law declared this also [513] to us beforehand in a figurative manner. For the God of all did indeed come down in the form of fire upon Mount Sinai, and administered to the Israelites those laws through which they should most properly have attained original righteousness. For the law was, as it were, a way of entering into more perfect things, consisting of both rudiments and anticipations of the teachings given through Christ.

It also says, *And he said to Moses, "Come up to God, you, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. They shall worship the Lord from a distance, and Moses shall draw near to God alone, but they shall not draw near, and the people shall not come up with them."*[96] When the all-wise Moses announced these things, all the people answered with a loud voice, saying, *"All the words that the Lord has spoken, we will do and will obey."*[97] And what comes next? *And Moses wrote down,* it says, *all the words of the Lord. Then Moses rose up early in the morning and built an altar on the mountain, and he set up twelve stones for the twelve tribes of Israel. He sent forth young men of the people of Israel, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young calves as a peace offering to the Lord God. Then Moses took half of the blood and poured it into bowls, and poured out half of the blood against the altar. Taking the book of the covenant, he read it in the hearing of the people, and they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do and will obey." So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it upon the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord made with you in accordance with all these words."*[98]

95. Var. (to end of sentence) "and in him, through whom there has been a total recapitulation [*anakephalaiôsis*] and return to the beginning, while those things that had caused the separation are completely annulled."

96. Ex 24.1–2.

97. Cf. Ex 24.3; var. omit "and will obey."

98. Ex 24.4–8.

Once the sacrifice had been performed and all the people had been sprinkled with the blood of the covenant, *Moses and Aaron,* it says, *and Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of the people of Israel went up. And they saw the place where the God of Israel stood, and under his feet there was something that looked as if it were made*[99] *of sapphire stones, which appeared like the firmament of heaven in its clearness. Not one of the chief men of Israel perished, but they appeared in the place of God, and ate and drank.*[100]

So beginning with the sense of what lies directly before us, we shall now discuss what is appropriate with regard to each of the matters that have been read, matters which have come to us from Christ.

In the inspired Scripture we see things described as though pictured on a writing tablet. We see the church in the heavenly places above, that is in heaven, and on the earth we see that which bears some resemblance to that which is above, namely what we call a hill or a mountain, since something may be raised up and made high through the virtue of those who dwell there. For the mind of the saints is not low nor cast down, but is rather a mind that surpasses that of earthly and fleshly desires, rising up to what is on high. So what was said through David is true, that "the mighty gods[101] of the earth have been greatly exalted."[102]

So, with regard to those who have chosen to live in such a way, and who have ascended to a higher level of virtue, it is quite fitting that they should abide in the heavenly dwellings. The psalmist gives them assurance of this when he says, "Who shall ascend [516] the mountain of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not given his soul to vanity, and who has not sworn deceitfully to his neighbor. He has not lent his money at interest, nor has he received bribes against the innocent. He will receive a blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God his

99. Var. "were in the form."
100. Ex 24.9–11.
101. Var. "the mighty ones of God," according to the standard LXX reading.
102. Ps 47.9 (46.10 LXX).

Savior. This is the generation of those who seek the face of the God of Jacob."[103]

2. So then, the mountain that the saints may ascend is heaven, which is to say the church of the firstborn, but the profane and the unholy may not tread there.

Now the God of all instructed Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel to go up the mountain. He said, *"They shall worship the Lord from a distance, and Moses alone shall draw near to God, but they shall not draw near, and the people shall not come up with them."*[104]

The sons who were descended from Aaron signify to us the sacred race, and the elders those who are elected by reason of birth. Further, Aaron depicts to us Christ himself, the holy and innocent high priest, through whom we have obtained the birth through the Spirit and water and are called "a chosen[105] race, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation."[106] Therefore, we, the chosen and holy ones, shall eventually ascend to the city above, with Christ the great priest accompanying us and leading us, he who became one of us on our account, and who also worships with us the one who is by nature God, even the Father.[107]

Moses draws near, while the Son is with us who are far off. Inasmuch as he relates to the mystery of the economy of the Incarnation, Moses is closer to God, as a mediator of the law and one who defines it. Seeing that the Son came to be with us, even though he is by nature the God and Lord of all, he thus does not deem it unworthy to be counted as one of us. But he is content to be considered, by way of the divine economy, as being lower than Moses. He therefore became one of us, under the law itself, even though as God he was the one who gave the law. That he was under the law is readily seen from the fact that he was circumcised on the eighth day. Also he paid the

103. Ps 24.3–5 (23.3–5 LXX); 15.5 (14.5 LXX).

104. Var. omit "with them."

105. Var. "zealous."

106. 1 Pt 2.9.

107. Var. "who, even though he has divine nature, worships the Father with us."

didrachma tax, even though, being the Son according to his nature, he was exempt. And that sacred Scripture will suffice which says that Emmanuel was "born under the law."[108]

Now, that it was on account of his humanity, and because he became human like us, under the law, that Christ was considered as having been put in second place to Moses, you can also understand by other means. For the God of all commanded the most-noble Moses to free Israel from its unbearable bondage, and to say to Pharaoh, "The Lord God of the Hebrews has summoned us."[109] Yet he declares the law to be impotent with regard to redemption. He therefore combines the one who is hesitant[110] with the divine Aaron, the one that was a type of Christ, who is able to do all things and through whom there is complete redemption. For God said the following to Moses: "Behold, I have made you as a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother will be your prophet. You will speak to him all that I command you, and Aaron your brother will speak to Pharaoh."[111] Note that Aaron, as he carries out the part of Moses the lawgiver, also acts as mediator. That is why the blessed Paul also ascribes the law to him, [517] even though it was dissolved[112] by God. For this is what is written: "Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses."[113]

So then, it is only we who are holy and elect that ascend into the heavenly mount, while the other multitude remains below. For *"the people,"* it says, *"shall not come up with them,"* because, as the Savior says, "Many are called, but few are chosen."[114] So we go up, but only with Christ. For Aaron was then with those who were worshiping, and he was among the number of those who were still at a distance. In the same way Christ was also at a dis-

108. Gal 4.4.

109. Ex 3.18; 5.3.

110. Or "who shrinks back," referring to Moses (cf. Ex 4.10, 13).

111. Ex 7.1–2.

112. Var. "spoken."

113. Heb 10.28. The logic of the citation appears to lie in the fact that both Moses and Aaron, each encapsulating the law, together comprise two witnesses.

114. Mt 22.14.

tance with us for our sakes, in order that we might come near to the Father with him and through him. For it is clear that everything was carried out on our account and for our sakes. He was with us among the dead, so that we too might enter life with him and through him, for when he had trampled down the power of death, he came back to life again. So he was with us at a distance, even though he is near, in order that we also with him and through him might draw near to the Father. And it was fulfilled. For having become partakers in him through the Spirit, we have been united with God the Father through him, since we are indeed "partakers of the divine nature," in accordance with the Scriptures.[115]

Nevertheless, the God of all commanded Moses and Aaron, those who were holy and elect, to ascend the high mountain. So it was necessary that those who were later to come into glory, those who were presented as the first actually to go up that they might draw near to God, should be purified by the blood of Christ, who gave his life in exchange for the life of all, and who offered up the flesh that he had assumed as a pleasing aroma. For he gave himself on our behalf as an offering that was holy and undefiled to God, a spiritual burnt offering. This the divine Moses also showed us in a figure, through the illumination given by the Spirit, and leads the way to the knowledge of things to come.

Now we are to understand, it seems to me, that before Moses and those who were chosen went up, *he wrote down all the words of the Lord*. Why this was done beforehand we shall directly state. It was necessary, I believe, for those permitted to undertake the journey up on high to have the law of God inscribed in their mind and upon their heart, so that they might forthwith proclaim to him in song, "I have hidden your sayings in my heart, that I might not sin against you."[116] For just as it is profitable for life and a matter of salvation to remember always the words of God, in the same way, I believe, it is the cause of ruin to want to forget them. So then, the blessed Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, concerning which he himself declared to those who

115. 2 Pt 1.4.
116. Ps 119.11 (118.11 LXX).

were being instructed by him, or rather to us ourselves, "And you shall speak of them as you sit in your home, and as you walk along the road, when you go to bed and when you get up."[117]

Having risen early in the morning, Moses built an altar and set twelve stones around it for the twelve tribes of Israel. Then *he sent forth young men of the people of Israel,*[118] and these, it says, *offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young calves as a peace offering to God.* The altar was a particularly distinct figure of the church of Christ, which was, in a way, present[119] there upon the mountain. [520] For we say that this other assembly is, as it were, in a high mountain, and is the home city[120] of the firstborn, whose designer and builder is God.[121]

The altar, then, is represented to us as being like the church; around it Moses, in his careful arranging, also set up the twelve stones for the twelve tribes of Israel. In this he was, in effect, giving a guarantee ahead of time to those of the race of Israel that the church of Christ would be a most fitting place for them, and that perhaps Israel should cry out in prayer, "I will go about your altar, O Lord, for me to hear the sound of praise."[122] That the Father sent the Son as a Savior and Redeemer especially to Israel before all others, Christ himself explains when he says, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."[123] But since they raged against him, falling into the most extraordinary madness, Christ necessarily removed himself to the Gentiles. So when he placed the twelve stones around the altar for the twelve tribes of Israel, Moses signified, as I just said, that the altar of Christ was a most fitting place for Israel to be.

From what transpired here, one may learn that those admired for their manliness, of a sort that is spiritual and godly,

117. Dt 6.7.

118. Var. omit all the foregoing words in this sentence.

119. Var. add "still."

120. *mêtropolis*; var. "the mother of the firstborn, the beautiful city above."

121. Cf. Heb 11.10.

122. Ps 26.7 (25.7 LXX). The Hebrew reads "to make heard the sound of praise," in which the verb "hear" appears in a causative form. The LXX rendering, however, makes "hear" a simple active verb. In this citation Cyril, or the text he was following, has added "for me" to this verb.

123. Mt 15.24.

being those having a firm and vigorous mind, would one day come to perform the sacred ministry of the mystery of Christ. For the *young men* were in fact sent forth, and they presented the burnt offerings. We find that the holy apostles performed this same thing. These, one might say, roamed over all the earth, ministering to Christ and presenting burnt offerings, that is, those people distinguished by a pure faith, and who were especially well fitted to pursue virtue diligently. For the ability to give instruction in the mysteries does not belong to a feeble understanding, nor to a mind that is afflicted with weakness or that is wont to fall into worldly desires. But it belongs to the one who is equipped and who has youthful vigor, and who can also say, "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."[124] For youthfulness and a strength that is greater than all things pertain to such a one as this. It is fitting, then, that this person should consecrate burnt offerings and spiritual sacrifices to God, and should engage in the spiritual ministry and perform the sacrifice of salvation, which is very suitably prefigured through the offering up of the calves.

Now at times, on account of the calf's great strength, and because it is the most preeminent of the clean animals, Christ is likened to a mature calf. But at other times he is likened to a small calf, in that, as you can also see, the Only-Begotten became man, and was under a yoke of bondage, since it is true that he came in the form of a servant. As much as one might say, however, with regard to the mystery of his coming in the flesh, he was with us under a yoke of servitude, yet he had no experience[125] of being yoked, because he was of a nature that was heavenly and free. This is why he is likened to a small calf, because he is both under the yoke and without a yoke. For the small calf is one that is untried by the yoke, although this kind of animal is born for the yoke. Besides this, while he was born under the law, as though under a yoke, he was at the same time free, for he was above the law, being the Lawgiver and God. And thirdly, it would [521] seem, he took away human flesh from the earth, that flesh which was diseased within itself on

124. Phil 1.21.

125. *apeiratos,* "untried," "untested," and also "untempted."

account of the law of sin, in accordance with what Paul says.[126] As much as it concerns the nature of flesh, he appears to have been put under the yoke of sin, but he had no experience[127] of it. For "he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."[128] Christ, then, is most reasonably called a young calf in this way also because he has become a new creature, for he himself is the firstfruits of those who have been called to attain this.

That it was necessary for those who were seeking to draw near to God to be sanctified by blood, Moses demonstrated when he sprinkled blood on all the people and on the book. From this we also learn that Moses himself was imperfect in sanctification, for you can see how he himself, as an individual, was also sanctified by the sprinkling of blood. For the law does not at all cleanse from sin, but it is the grace of the mysteries revealed through Christ that accomplishes this.

So Moses, the instructor in sacred matters, rose very early in the morning to set up the object of the divine mystery and, as I[129] have already said above, to place around it twelve stones and also to sacrifice young calves. For just as when it is very early in the morning, when, as it were, the Morning Star is shining, and the spiritual day rises upon us, when night is past, and the demonic darkness has ceased, so the radiant beauty of the church with its noble sacrifice is shown forth, upon which the mystery of Christ is enacted, with the tribes of the earth standing around it, represented figuratively by the stones. And so the divine Peter,[130] reshaping the picture given by this figure into reality, writes to those sanctified in Christ, "in whom you also, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood."[131]

The young men offered up the burnt sacrifices and were

126. Cf. Rom 7.5, 23–25; 8.3.
127. See n. 125 above.
128. Rom 8.3–4.
129. Var. "we."
130. Cyril actually made the error of writing "Paul" at this point.
131. 1 Pt 2.5.

spiritual officiators of sacred rites. Then, and only then, did we come into the presence of the Father. And we, being considered as the assembly of those standing there, offered to him the vigor of our mind, which is ready for every manner of good work. This same thing the divine David himself expressly preannounced to us when, assuming the role of believers, he said to the God of all, "In the morning you shall hear my voice; in the morning I will wait upon you, and I will look up, for you are not a God who desires iniquity, nor shall the one who does evil dwell with you."[132]

So having been sanctified, which was then expressed in a figure through the consecration by the blood,[133] *Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up into the mountain. And they saw under his feet there was something that looked as if it were made of sapphire stones, which appeared like the firmament of heaven in its clearness. Not one of the chief men of Israel perished, but they appeared in the place of God, and ate and drank.*[134]

Note how they saw what was called *the place of God,* like the firmament of heaven in appearance. For heaven is bright, and that which is high and ethereal is like sapphire. So it is particularly appropriate that heaven should be the place where [524] one comes to rest, abiding among angels. For one who is holy dwells among the holy and is made to recline with those who inhabit the heavenly city, on account of being well suited and especially well prepared for the excellence of that life. For we believe the multitude of heavenly spirits to be holy.

It says that what was under his feet appeared to those who went up the mountain to be *like the appearance of the firmament of heaven in its clearness.* For it was necessary that those who had been afflicted with the error of polytheism, and who had worshiped the creature, having then been called to the knowledge of God, should necessarily see, much to their benefit, that he has heaven itself under his feet, and that he is the Master of all, the one who brings everything into existence, and who redeems them from the ancient error.

132. Ps 5.3–4 (5.4–5 LXX).
133. Var. add "of the sacrifice."
134. Var. add "there."

That a further parallel exists with regard to those who would eventually enter into the heavenly city, and who would partake richly of the divine gifts and delight in those good and spiritual things that come from Christ,[135] is shown[136] by the fact that, having come to be in the place of God, those who went up the mountain ate and drank.

Among those things I said a moment ago was the fact that Moses alone was instructed to draw near to God, while the others were to worship at a distance, among whom was Aaron also. So we said that he who is the Son, being near to God the Father, came to be with us in our nature at a distance, as our innocent and undefiled high priest, so that through him and also with him, we too might find ourselves near. For this reason he was also called Emmanuel, which means "God with us."

Yet, although the Son later came to be with us as a man, one can see that not even the blessed Moses himself had access to the Father without Christ acting as mediator. For it is he who is the way, he who is the door, as we said before. And we also learn this from the following words, for it says, *The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me in the mountain, and stand there, and I will give you the stone tablets, the law, and the tablets*[137] *that I have written to give them laws." Then Moses rose up with Joshua his attendant, and they went up into the mountain of God.*[138] Note that Moses, the one who received the law in shadows and pictures,[139] was in fact called, yet Joshua, who had not been summoned, comes along with him as a type of Christ, who is not called by the Father in the same way as others, for he is always with him. So having forged a way for those who are called, he acts as a mediator and as one who associates with them. For it is impossible, as I said, that we should come to be with God the Father in any other way except through Christ's mediatorship alone. To him, then,

135. Var. "from God."

136. Var. add "clearly."

137. Here Cyril departs from the LXX, which reads "the stone tablets, the law and the commandments," as followed by the Harleian copy of the *Glaphyra*.

138. Ex 24.12–13.

139. Or "and in letters" (*grammasin*).

be glory and might, together with the all-holy Father, and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the calf made by Israel

Those who do not have any law to assist them are carried away, and very easily so, into all kinds of deeds by the blind and uncontrolled manner of their impetuous desires, and they incur much guilt before God and men, even though it may very much seem as though they are afflicted by a disease and are without blame. But this is not so. For if there is something most untoward, this they admire and praise as being of value, and they do not know how to distinguish what is truly worthy of acceptance from what, contrariwise, is shameful and questionable.[140] It is just like the merchant ships sailing to and fro upon the great and wide sea. If they have a skilled master mariner standing at the rudder, then they progress along a straight course. But if there is someone [525] who is not greatly skilled, they are cast about all over the sea, turning as they are pushed by the waves, which can drive them to any place whatsoever. So it is with the soul of a man that has no law standing over it. It is readily inclined to everything it pleases and is ravaged by the waves of its own pleasures.

We discover that Israel suffered from this very thing. For not yet having the mind that progresses in godliness, nor the heart that leans upon God, they were caught, as it were, going backwards, and were content to be charged with accursed and abominable idolatry. The Savior himself therefore said concerning them, "When the unclean spirit goes out from a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. 'I will return,' it says, 'to my own place.' And when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and[141] brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the final state of that man is worse than the first." Then he adds, "Truly, I say to you, so

140. Var. "unacceptable."
141. Var. omit "goes and."

it shall be with this evil generation."[142] For the evil spirit was driven out in the beginning when they sacrificed the lamb as a type of Christ, and were anointed by its blood, and escaped the Destroyer. But lo and behold, the spirit burst in again, in a way that was much worse than before, for [Scripture] speaks truly regarding those who choose to undergo such things when it says, "It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn back from the holy commandment given to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb: 'A dog returns to its own vomit,' and 'A sow that is washed goes back to wallowing in the mud.'"[143]

Anyone, then, who takes the trouble to do so may observe that the Israelites went back to their own vomit, and once again gave themselves to wallowing in the mud. For it is written, *When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people joined together against Aaron, and said to him, "Arise and make for us gods who will go before us. As for this man Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him." Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold earrings that are in the ears of your wives and daughters, and bring them to me." So all the people took off the gold earrings in the ears of their wives, and brought them to Aaron. He received the gold from their hands, and fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made it into a golden calf. Then they*[144] *said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it, and made a proclamation, saying, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord." Then he rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*[145]

Now the divine Moses, when he was being thoroughly instructed in the law, spent some time [528] on Mount Sinai. But the people foolishly gave little consideration to the reasons for

142. Mt 12.43–45.

143. 2 Pt 2.21–22. Cf. Prv 26.11.

144. Some manuscripts of the LXX say "he," a reading which Cyril himself adopts below (528).

145. Ex 32.1–6.

his delay, and so sank into a state of madness. As a result they completely failed to recognize that everything had been made by the all-powerful God, even though they had seen him with the appearance of fire upon Mount Sinai, and had heard his voice for themselves, and had entreated Moses to act as their mediator. One might say[146] of them, "O how they had reached the full measure of folly!" And so Moses was delayed.

What, then, was this to the God who is always present with those upon the earth, even though he may perhaps not be seen? The divine David cried out, "A perverse and rebellious generation."[147] Moses also said with regard to this, "You forgot the God who feeds you."[148] What kind of gods did he need who had so wonderfully redeemed the people, he who made the hail and the three days of darkness fall upon the land of the Egyptians, by whom all the firstborn perished in a single night, and for whom the wild and untamable sea allowed the people to escape the cruelty of their pursuers? If one should wish the details of every event, it would take a long time to speak of them all.

So then, while the all-wise Moses was delayed, the people set themselves against Aaron. And when he saw how irresistible their onslaught was (for they cried out, *"Make for us gods who will go before us"*), he instructed them to bring the earrings of their wives and daughters, and they brought them straight away. That they had fallen into the error they had committed in Egypt and slipped back into their former senselessness, Aaron demonstrated through the object he made, as he fashioned for them an image to worship in the form of a calf. For in Egypt the calf was an object of veneration both for the Egyptians themselves and for those infected with their deceit.

Note, then, how they returned to their former condition. The unclean spirit came into them again, and what the Savior said happened to them—their final state was worse than the first.

I believe that the divine Aaron asked for the earrings in a

146. Var. "you might hear someone say."
147. Ps 78.8 (77.8 LXX).
148. Dt 32.18.

providentially accommodated manner,[149] by which it was signifying that they had, in effect, stripped their ability to hear of its proper adornment, no longer being disposed to obey, but rather being carried away into a godless[150] and profane disobedience. For God had said, "You shall have no other gods beside me."[151] But the people, having approved these words and accorded them the proper honor, and having said, "All that God has spoken we will do and will obey," then sought out carved gods. Do you see how they refused to give heed? And this, I believe, is what is meant by the adornment of the ears.

See how Aaron thought little of the undertaking. For when he showed them the image made in the form of a calf, he proclaimed, *"These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."* Yet they had not been redeemed by a calf (for how could that be?), but by a mighty hand, and with a great arm, and with signs and wonders. So, recalling those things done by God, it was surely in a feigned manner that Aaron said, *"These are your gods, O Israel."* He also offered sacrifices, and they ate and drank [529] as though at a feast, and they rose up to play. For turning away from God leads[152] to bondage to the things of the flesh, to consider impure behavior as a delight, and for pleasure to be reckoned as good and enjoyable, matters which it would have been better for them to have mourned.

Therefore, the blessed[153] Paul also counted impure idolatry among carnal failings, saying, "For the works of the flesh are evident, which are sexual immorality, impurity, lewdness, idolatry."[154] For this error leads to worse things, even to be carried away from God, and it compels one to suffer the most shameful of all evils. For they danced, engaging, I suppose, in feasting songs, doing and saying things of which drunkards might be accused.

So God made these impetuous actions known to the divine

149. *oikonomikôs.*

150. *theomisês,* which may have the sense of either "God-hating" or "hated by God."

151. Ex 20.3.

152. Var. add "wholly."

153. Var. "divine."

154. Gal 5.19.

Moses, who was unaware of them, saying, *"Go down from here at once, for the people you brought out from the land of Egypt have transgressed. They have quickly turned aside from the way which you commanded them. They have made a calf for themselves, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it,*[155] *and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.' Now let me alone, and I will vent my anger against them and consume them; and I will make you into a great nation." Then Moses prayed before the Lord his God.*[156]

Note how Israel is so easily carried away and so readily turns to apostasy. God does not consider them worthy of calling his own people, but even though it was he himself who had pronounced the law, he here attributes it to Moses, for he says, *"They have quickly turned aside from the way which you commanded them."*[157] So Christ also, speaking to those who were of a similar mind as these, who were shaped by the thought of impiety, with no concern to act well in accordance with the truth, said that at the divine judgment seat the Judge would declare, "Depart from me, you workers of iniquity, I do not know you."[158] Surely it is those who have an unceasing love for God that are known to him and are truly his people, who maintain a genuine faith, who are resolved to do good, and who keep themselves far from any accusation of promiscuous behavior.

Yet Moses persisted in his entreaty, determined to restrain the wrath against all the people. For it was necessary for the one acting as mediator to be like Christ, who warded off the wrath of heaven that was[159] upon us due to our many sins, and who, being the Son, offered justification by faith to those who had sinned. Moses was, then, on this occasion also, a figure of the mediatorship of Christ. So by his supplications the divine Moses held back the severity of God's wrath; then he

155. Var. omit "and sacrificed to it."

156. Ex 32.7–8, 10–11.

157. It should be noted that the second person ("you") is only a feature of the LXX and not of the Masoretic Hebrew text, which has a first person verb ("I commanded them"). If, however, the vowel points of the Hebrew are excluded, as they were a later addition to the consonantal text, the form is ambiguous and could be taken as either first or second person.

158. Cf. Mt 25.12; Lk 13.27.

159. Var. add "coming."

came down from the mountain. When he learned of those who were dancing, and when the sound of those who were drunk reached his ears, he broke the tablets in pieces upon which the laws were inscribed. He no longer deemed the people worthy of an instructor as they were disobedient and reckless, and extremely easily led with regard to things that were not even proper for them to think about, and thus they committed apostasy[160] so soon.

When Moses came to the congregation, he smashed the calf. Then he put it into the water, and, it says, he made the people of Israel drink it. By this means he was, in effect, [532] signifying that their impious act would even reach the organs and bowels within them. I think too that he was perhaps in a way also indicating to them that they had a heart that was full of profane and abominable idolatry. Then, having called those who were chosen, he ordered them to kill first and foremost those who were guiltier than the others, not sparing brothers, neighbors, or friends. And there fell twenty-three thousand people.[161]

After he had exacted the due punishment upon those who had committed such an act of unrestrained impiety, Moses turned back to God and offered entreaties on behalf of the others. Not without some effort on Moses's part did God consent to his request, saying that he would not accompany them himself, but that he would rather send an angel with them as a leader to guide them on the journey. At this the people mourned, and God commanded them to remove their robes and all their adornments, and that they should travel in such a state of dejection. And Moses, having been brought to the limit of his endurance, *took his tent,* it says, *and pitched it outside the camp.*[162] And so the passage has briefly been dealt with at the literal level.

Now we find that the people of Israel undertook to do the

160. Var. "acted impiously."

161. Cf. Ex 32.20, 25–28. Both the Hebrew and LXX agree that the number is, in fact, only "three thousand."

162. Ex 33.7.

very same things[163] when the Only-Begotten became human like us. For he called them into the kingdom of heaven, just as they were called through Moses long ago to go into the land of promise, and he promised to set free those who believed in him. He had in fact then freed from the oppression of Egypt those of the race of Israel who received by faith salvation through blood, for they had slaughtered the lamb by way of a figure, while Christ was yet to fulfill the mystery.

Those, however, who had the law that instructed them well in regard to Christ through shadows and types, who held wholly to the words of Moses[164] while having no thought for Moses himself (for they had regard for the teaching and commandments of men), threw off the yoke of service under God. For they did not in any way accept the one through whom he exercises power over all things, which is Christ. And what was the cause of this? It was because they had turned aside to worldly deceit and deemed pleasures in this life to be a more important pursuit, and so inevitably they stumbled. For they were invited to the wedding and did not wish to go, preferring the acquisition of wives and of fields.[165] And so, since they had sunk into such impiety, it was then the time that Israel should endure great wrath. But the entreaties of the saints saved the remnant, though punishment came upon many. For they fell, consumed by the sword and bitter warfare, and they were scarcely aware that the charge against them was the evil they had committed in raging against Christ.

So, having cast off, as it were, their garments of former glory and all spiritual adornment, Israel became much afflicted with unpleasantness and were destitute of all glory. And that Christ himself also departed from them, Moses indicated when he removed his own tent far from the camp. For we see how, in forsaking the masses of the Jews, that is, their encampment,[166] and having in a way removed himself from the multitude of those people to distant lands, Christ indicated the immovable tent of

163. Var. add "and wronged one who was a kinsman."
164. Var. add "the all-wise."
165. Cf. Lk 14.16–24.
166. Var. omit "that is, their encampment."

the Gentiles. This is the church [533], which he himself proclaims as his own, when he says through the psalmist, "Here I will dwell, for I have chosen it."[167]

It was necessary, then, that those who did not have Emmanuel, the Lord of glory,[168] should be seen to have been stripped of ornamentation and glory, while those who love him he invests with the adornment of faith and virtue. With regard to this they are greatly pleased to say, "Let my soul rejoice in the Lord. For he has clothed me with the garment of salvation, and the robe of gladness; he has put a garland upon me as on a bridegroom, and adorned me with ornaments like a bride."[169] This is a beauty that is quite outstanding, and by it we mean spiritual beauty in Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, now and always, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the veil over the face of Moses

"Do you understand what you are reading?"[170] It is quite appropriate that these words should be uttered in connection with the people of the Jews, whose understanding in this matter has come to such madness that they are called senseless by the sacred oracles. For "Behold," it says, "a foolish and senseless people, who have eyes and do not see, who have ears and do not hear."[171] That the law given to them through Moses was utterly unprofitable due to their great lack of understanding, Christ himself proved to us when he said, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal[172] life; and it is they that testify of me. Yet you do not wish to come to me that you may have life."[173] For "a hardening has come upon part of Israel,"[174] and they lacked enlightenment through the Spirit.

167. Ps 132.14 (131.14 LXX).
168. Var. omit "the Lord of glory."
169. Is 61.10.
170. Acts 8.30.
171. Jer 5.21.
172. Var. omit "eternal."
173. Jn 5.39–40.
174. Rom 11.25.

They were dull with regard to the faith, it being altogether impossible for them to be brought to wish for and give thought for those things needful for salvation.

Yet Israel was not above punishment, because, after choosing what was profitable for them, they turned to an uncontrollable disobedience, and though they had the light from heaven above, they loved rather to walk in the dark and in the night. It was this that the prophet meant when he said concerning them, "While they were waiting for light, darkness came upon them; while they were waiting for brightness, they walked in gloom."[175] They continued to be wild and unrestrained, deeming those things that were profitable to be of very little account in any way, things by means of which they would probably have easily avoided committing unrighteous acts. For Christ declared, "I am the light of the world," and, "While you have the light, walk in the light, so that darkness will not overtake you."[176] So they were just the same as those who have no sense or understanding. Consequently, they were overtaken by the darkness and continued living as in the night, being completely without any share in divine illumination and lacking divine light, for they utterly failed to understand the inspired Scripture.

And the reason for the foregoing the divine Paul explains to us when he says, "For until this very day the same veil remains over the reading of the old covenant. It has not been removed, because in Christ it is done away with. Even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies upon their hearts. But when [536] anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."[177]

Note, then, the mystery that shines forth in the older sacred writings. It reads as follows: *The Lord said to Moses, "Write down these words, for on the basis of these words I will establish*[178] *a covenant with you and with Israel." So Moses was there before the Lord for forty days and forty nights. He ate no bread, nor did he drink any water.*

175. Is 59.9.
176. Jn 12.35.
177. 2 Cor 3.13–17.
178. The LXX here in fact reads, "I have established" (*tetheimai*).

And he wrote upon the tablets these words of the covenant, the ten commandments. When Moses came down from the mountain (and the two tablets were in his hands as he was coming down from the mountain), Moses did not know that the appearance of the skin of his face had been glorified when God was speaking to him. Then Aaron and all the elders of Israel saw Moses, and the appearance of the skin of his face had been made glorious, and they were afraid to go near him. But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation came back to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterwards all the people of Israel approached him, and he gave them all the commandments that the Lord had spoken to him in the mountain. When Moses had finished speaking to him, he put a veil over his face. But whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak to him, he would remove the veil until he came out. And when he came out he told all the people of Israel what the Lord had commanded him. And the people of Israel saw that the face of Moses had been glorified, so Moses put the veil over his face until he went in to speak with him.[179]

Now the God of all inscribed the law on tablets made of stone. But when the face of Moses was made radiant by contact with the divine light while he was in the presence of God during the forty days with no thought for human concerns, those who were chosen out of Israel failed to comprehend what they saw, Aaron above all others. Yet when they withdrew from him and turned to flee, Moses called them back. So he would speak to the people of Israel, having first put the veil in place over his face, making the beam of the divine light which shone forth upon the shadows much more bearable for the multitudes of people. *But when he went in to God,* it says, *he removed the veil.*

You see, therefore, how the light of the law is not able to be comprehended by the thinking of the Jews. But if what is written in it is interpreted spiritually, nothing other than the mystery of Christ will shine forth, and the divine and most lucid light will enter into the hearts of those who hear. The people of Israel, however, did not hear the sacred oracles in this way, nor did they understand the depth of the mystery. And so Nicodemus, when he heard Christ talking about the rebirth through the Spirit, feebly and nonsensically declared, "How can a man

179. Ex 34.27–35.

be born again [537] when he is old? Can he enter into his mother's womb a second time and be born?"[180] Then, as Christ was persuading him of the need to value faith more than understanding and reason, Nicodemus added to this, "How can these things be?"[181] even though the law had depicted the mystery[182] beforehand through innumerable figures. So then, the very light of the law was not accepted by the Jews, and not only by the common masses and the weak, but also by those appointed to special and sacred office.

You have learned that Aaron and the elders with him were afraid of Moses's glory. It was therefore absolutely necessary that Moses put on the veil. For the law contains a shadow, the earthiness of the letter, and the not very great brightness of the literal sense. When, however, he entered into the presence of God, it says that Moses removed the veil. This same thing we find also to be true with respect to our own selves. For when we have been brought, as it were, into the presence of God the Father, being led there by Christ, we will see the glory of Moses without any obscuring shadows, as we will understand the law spiritually, for "we are being transformed from one degree of glory to another," as it is written.[183]

Now it cannot be doubted that the mystery of Christ is glorious, since the blessed Paul proclaimed concerning the first and the second covenant, "For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, how much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory?"[184] For the shadow of the law has passed away, even though it had been honored by the glory that came through Moses, namely, that seen in the face of Moses. Yet those unshakeable things established by Christ remain, and he has an abundance of glory and grace which is altogether greater than the former glory.

So then, having had the shadows present in the law removed, we behold the glory of God, in accordance with what is writ-

180. Jn 3.4.
181. Jn 3.9.
182. Var. add "of Christ."
183. 2 Cor 3.18.
184. 2 Cor 3.9.

ten.[185] If we should attend to the lamb slain by way of a figure, we shall immediately know the mystery, discovering the true Lamb, who because of us and for our sake delivered himself up as a pleasing aroma to God the Father. Even if the ashes of a heifer sprinkled upon those who were defiled should sanctify with regard to the cleansing of the flesh,[186] we shall understand that the purification made through Christ is nothing less than that which comes through water and Spirit, not ridding us of fleshly dirt, but cleansing us from the blemish of pollutions within the spirit and soul. For we have been sanctified in Christ.

It will also be helpful for us to add this. Up to this chapter in Exodus it has been our design to separate out the narratives, not because we are reluctant to interpret the adjoining passages, but because we have composed books entitled "Concerning Worship in Spirit and Truth." In these books, so as to leave out nothing of importance from our discussion, we undertook suitable investigations into the construction of the holy tabernacle and everything found in it, namely, the holy place,[187] the ark, the table, and the lampstand. We devoted the ninth and tenth books to this purpose.

To our God be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.[188]

185. Cf. 2 Cor 3.19.

186. Cf. Heb 9.13.

187. Var. "mercy seat" (*hilastêrion,* that is, the lid of the ark where propitiation took place).

188. Var. omit "To our God be the glory for ever and ever. Amen."

BOOK ELEVEN: LEVITICUS

That [540] *the suffering of Christ was a peace offering*[1]

THE GOD OF ALL did not in fact make death, nor does he delight in the destruction of living beings, but he created all things to exist and the generations of the world to be perpetuated. Also, there is no kingdom of Hades upon the earth, but, as it is written, "By the envy of the devil death entered the world."[2] This statement in itself very suitably contains the truth of the matter. For the Maker did not entrust that which was so wonderful and glorious to those who had come into being for it then to perish so easily. Rather, death entered due to wrath, because our forefather Adam disregarded the divine command and turned aside to disobedience and waywardness.

In Christ, however, the charges were taken up and removed from the midst, through the obedience of one man, for in him we have been justified. The divine Paul testifies to this when he writes, "For as through one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also through one man's obedience many will be made righteous."[3] In that one man we were condemned to death, but we have been shown mercy through Christ, and we have been given new life. For to the Father he was "obedient even to the point of death," "he laid down his life on our behalf," and "by his wounds we were healed," in accordance with the Scriptures.[4]

1. *sôtêrios*, "saving," "salvific." This is the term employed by the translators of the LXX for the levitical "peace offering" (cf. Lv 3.1).

2. Wis 2.24.

3. Rom 5.19.

4. Cf. Phil 2.8; 1 Jn 3.16; Is 53.5; 1 Pt 2.24.

It could be said that although we were afflicted with the disease of sin in Adam with respect to the world, in Christ we have now become a spiritual sacrifice that is fragrant to God the Father, good and acceptable, exceedingly better than the shadow relating to the law. So Christ is our firstfruits, and he has opened up a new way for us. For this [541] is what David says to God the Father in heaven in the book of Psalms: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but you have prepared a body for me; burnt offerings and sin offerings did not please you. Then I said, 'Behold, I come; I desired to do your will, O God.'"[5]

It is possible now to look into these things further from what is written in Leviticus. There we read as follows: *"If you bring an offering of firstfruits to the Lord, it shall be new grains ground and roasted for the Lord; so you shall bring the offering of the firstfruits. And you shall pour oil upon it, and you shall put frankincense on it. It is an offering. Then the priest shall offer up its memorial portion taken from the grains with the oil, and all its frankincense; it is an offering by fire to the Lord."*[6]

2. The literal meaning is very plain, and it does not, to my mind, require any effort to be able to understand the details. Nevertheless, I will say this, that the flour obtained from legumes[7] is called "grain." And here the mystery of Christ is present in figures. He himself is the offering made for us, the spiritual firstfruits, that is, the firstfruits of humanity, the firstborn from the dead, the first to enter incorruption, the firstfruits, as it were, of those that slept.

Now when a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it grows up as numerous ears of wheat. For this is what Christ himself told us, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."[8] Moreover, he did die, not on his own account, but for us.[9] This

5. Ps 40.6–8 (39.7–9 LXX). The Harleian MS extends the citation further to include: "and your law is within my heart."

6. Lv 2.14–16.

7. Cyril here uses the term *osprion*. This strictly denotes pulse of any kind, though it may refer to vegetables in general. The comments that follow, however, better relate to cereal crops.

8. Jn 12.24.

9. Var. add "and this is, in effect, a beautiful and fragrant offering without blemish which is presented to God the Father as though it were from us."

is subtly shown forth to us by the letter of the law. For it says that if one wished to present an offering of firstfruits to the Lord, it should be new grains ground and roasted for God.

Note, then, how Moses, or the letter of the law,[10] enjoins us to offer fruit out of that which is new. For Christ is the firstfruits, as I said, of a nature which is restored to newness of life, and in him all things have become new.

Yet it is not simply grains of wheat that are offered, but grains that have been ground from legumes. For in the same way that fine flour is obtained from wheat, so it is not the fresh grain itself that is prescribed for offering by fire, but ground grains are to be used in this case. This is to say that the law enjoined the use of ground grain from legumes so that there might appear to be something edible present in the offering. For it is not our custom to consider fresh grain as food, but that which is crushed.

So then, on the one hand Christ is the firstfruits and a beautiful and fragrant offering to God, and on the other he gives a great deal of nourishment to us. For he is "the bread that came down from heaven and gives life to the world,"[11] as if he provided himself as food for us, just like flour or grain.

It said that it was necessary to pour oil upon the offering, and it commanded that frankincense should also be applied to it. The oil symbolizes prosperity and happiness, while the frankincense suitably signifies to us that which is sacred and fragrant. For, as I said, Christ became an offering on our behalf, and was, as it were, the spiritual firstfruits of the fields. [544] That his death was not a matter for tears and mourning, but that tears and mourning were rather taken away and replaced by the most wonderful hope of happiness, how could one possibly doubt? For he was not held down by the gates of Hades, nor did he remain among the dead. Rather, although "death prevailed and devoured," in accordance with what the prophet said, yet "God also wiped away every tear from every face; he removed the reproach of his people from all the earth."[12] How was this

10. Var. "the sacred letter."
11. Jn 6.33.
12. Is 25.8.

so? Because Christ came back to life again, having trodden down death, in order that he might deliver us from corruption. And having so thoroughly dispensed with mourning also, he might now move those rejoicing to declare, "You have turned my mourning into joy for me; you have torn off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness."[13] The manner of the offering, therefore, could reasonably indicate the hope of happiness, but it might also be interpreted in another way if one wishes. We have been shown mercy in Christ, and this, I believe, is what it means when it says, "You have anointed my head with oil."[14]

Now by means of the incense we may understand that the death of Christ was not for any justifiable causes, or for any offense of his, but it was a most wonderful and wholly faultless sacrifice for us (for he was presented as an offering so that he might do away with sin and with the death that came through it and because of it). For our forefather Adam by the transgressions committed in the beginning received the curse that was most properly deserved. So when he first became infected with that truly malodorous disease of sin, he was justly condemned.[15] But the Lord and Savior of all, as he could not be charged with any wrongdoing (for he did not commit any sin), became a beautiful and fragrant offering for us, being the first, as it were, of the new fruit, and of every kind, that is to say, both of wheat and of legumes. For he died for all, great and small, Jew and Gentile, and through him and in him we have become a memorial portion for God the Father. This is why the letter of the law says, *"Then the priest shall offer up its memorial portion taken from the grains with the oil, and all its frankincense; it is an offering by fire to the Lord."* For in falling on account of our many sins, we also became, in effect, separated from the presence of the Father. But when Christ became an offering for us, he remembered us and blessed us. He blessed those who feared him, both small and great. Therefore, we have been taught to sing, "May you be blessed by the Lord, who made heaven and earth."[16]

13. Ps 30.11 (29.12 LXX).
14. Ps 23.5 (22.5 LXX).
15. Var. add "to death."
16. Ps 115.15 (113.23 LXX).

Now the law explains the sacrifice of Christ in another way also, saying, *"If his gift to the Lord is a peace offering, if he offers to him an animal from the herd, whether male or female, he shall bring one that is unblemished before the Lord. And he shall place his hands upon the head of the offering and he shall slay it by the entrance of the tabernacle of witness. Then the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall pour the blood upon the altar of burnt offering on all sides. From the peace offering they shall present as an offering by fire to the Lord the* [545] *fat covering the stomach and all the fat on the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat that is upon them at the loins; and the lobe of the liver shall be removed with the kidneys. The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall offer them up on the altar, upon the burnt offering, upon the wood which is on the fire, a pleasing aroma to the Lord."*[17]

Not only could it be an animal from the herd, but if one chose, he could make an offering from among the sheep, or one that would be reckoned as a peace offering from among the goats. The offering was carried out in the same manner, there being one form of ritual for them all. Whether the sacrificial victim happened to be male or whether it was female, it said it was necessary that it should be completely free from any blemish.

The discussion of this offering leads to Emmanuel himself. For he was the fattened calf, the spotless sacrificial victim who takes away the sin of the world, and who, like a he-goat, was slain for us, for according to the law a he-goat was slain as a sin offering.

But note carefully the manner of the offering. For in speaking of both male and female the letter of the law is not very precise. Yet Christ might be understood with reference to both. As a male, he was one who led, as a guide,[18] for of the two the male is more of a leader. But he was like a female in being under the law and one who was led. For the female is always subject to the authority of the male, taking second place, since she is in fact the lesser and smaller in size.

Now what was sacrificed was without blemish. And such is Christ. Therefore, he said, "The ruler of this world is coming,

17. Lv 3.1–5.
18. *kathêgêtês,* "guide," "teacher," "leader."

and he will find nothing in me."[19] And indeed, in being entirely without fault when he was among the Jews, he demonstrated his divine nature, saying, "Which of you convicts me of sin? If I speak the truth, why do you not believe me?"[20] So the sacred victim is without blemish.

The sacrifice was slain before the Lord at the entrance of the tabernacle, having been brought to him by the hand of the offerer. Then, once the blood had been poured out at the base of the altar, it said, the innards had to be offered. For the death of the Son, who laid down his own life for the life of the world, was enacted before the eyes, as it were, of God the Father. If it is true when it says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints,"[21] how could God the Father not count the death of the Son as worthy of being viewed by himself? For he does indeed altogether honor it and deem it worthy of his sight, while he turns away from what is loathsome and hateful.

Therefore, that Christ's death was not ignominious is directly shown by the fact that the Father chose to look upon it. He was slain at the very doors of the sanctuary. For Emmanuel died, opening up for us, as it were, the entrance to the holy of holies, opening also the doors of the church in heaven for those who believe in him. By the death of Christ, then, we reap the benefit of being able to move into the holy tabernacle itself, which the Lord and not man set up, the heavenly Jerusalem, the beautiful city above, the mother of the saints and the home[22] of angels.

Now, that the death of Christ would be holy and sacred [548] is indicated when it says that the blood had to be poured out upon the altar. This shows, in another way, that he laid down his life for the church. For the altar is a figure of the church, and the blood a figure of life. And the offering, or consecration, of the innards, namely, of the fat, the liver, and the kidneys, further indicates that all things in Christ are holy, sacred,

19. Cf. Jn 14.30. Cyril has changed the wording of the last clause, which in the Gospel literally says, "he has nothing in me."

20. Jn 8.46.

21. Ps 116.15 (115.16 LXX).

22. *trophos,* lit. "nurse," "nourisher," "sustainer."

and fragrant. For in the liver, the learned say, the desires, or the appetites, of every sort arise. The kidney is a part of the body which has dividing as its function, for it separates what is superfluous from what is necessary. This is the function that is carried out within us by the mind. For, since it is wise, the mind forbids that which would give rise to wrongdoing, but gladly permits the performance of that which is beneficial. So the blessed David, as though speaking in the person of Christ, sang in the Psalms, "All my desire is before you,"[23] and, "For you, O Lord, possess my inward parts."[24] And the fat shows in a figure that Emmanuel is full of virtue, as befits God. For the fat is, as it were, the best nourished part of living creatures, representing the virtue, I believe, of the same kind as the mind which receives nourishment from heaven.

So then, Christ is holy and without fault, full of virtue, sacred and fragrant, a spiritual burnt offering, which is offered in all kinds of forms, that is to say, in the form of a calf, a ram, and a goat. For he was a peace offering on our behalf, and he gave himself up, one for the sake of all, he who is equal in worth to all things, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

That having become partakers of the mystical blessing, we shall be completely and utterly holy and consecrated

The divine disciples became keepers of the mysteries of our Savior, though they did not seize this honor for themselves, nor come to it at their own behest. Rather, they were appointed to apostleship and ordained to minister the saving message, namely the gospel of Christ, to people everywhere under heaven. For he made the teachers of the mysteries to be eminent, saying to them, "Go and make disciples of all nations."[25] So, being especially willing and zealous, through the oracles of their Master they brought enlightenment to the world. Having

23. Ps 38.9 (37.10 LXX).

24. Ps 139.13 (138.13 LXX). Here "my inward parts" is literally "my kidneys."

25. Mt 28.19.

themselves had God the Father in heaven as their instructor, they then induced others to share in the same grace. For they no doubt remembered how Christ enjoined them regarding this matter, expressly saying, "Freely you have received, freely give."[26]

Accordingly, the divine Paul clearly articulated the deep mystery of the economy of the Incarnation when he wrote, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin. He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not [549] walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."[27] For Christ became sin[28] for our sake, as it is written,[29] and yet he was certainly not guilty of sin in any way.

Now it is not our habit to speak foolishly in this matter, since Christ did not know how to commit transgression, being God by nature, and having come forth from God the Father. Yet he became a sacrificial offering for sin, for "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us."[30] We say therefore that he also became sin. For he was sacrificed, as I said, so that by his blood he might gain possession of everything under heaven. For "we were bought with a price," in accordance with the Scriptures,[31] and we are not our own, but belong to him who became sin for us, in order that he might deliver us from the original transgression and make us holy through partaking of his holy flesh, and of his blood also.

This, we note, was declared to us ahead of time by the divine law, for it is written in Leviticus: *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, and say, 'This is the law of the sin offering. In the place where they slay the burnt offerings, they shall also slay the sin offering before the Lord. It is most holy. The priest who offers it shall eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the taber-*

26. Mt 10.8.
27. Rom 8.3–4.
28. Or "a sin offering."
29. 2 Cor 5.21.
30. 1 Cor 5.7.
31. 1 Cor 6.20.

nacle of witness. Anyone who touches its flesh will become holy. When any of its blood is spattered upon a garment, that upon which it was spattered shall be washed in a holy place. And the clay vessel in which it was boiled shall be smashed; but if it was boiled in a bronze vessel, it shall be scoured and rinsed with water. Every male among the priests shall eat it; it is most holy to the Lord.'"[32]

You can now see how God commanded the sin offering to be sacrificed. A male goat served here as a figure of Christ, who, as I said, became sin for us. For he was counted among the lawless, was crucified with thieves, and was also called a curse, since it is written that "cursed is everyone who is hanged upon a tree."[33] Although in the divine economy he lowered himself in this way on our account, he was and is holy, not by way of sharing in something received from another as we do, but rather with respect to his nature, since he himself is God. And we believe that through him creation is made holy, even those we call angels, and even those which are eminent in glory and which are superior and exalted, by which I mean, the "thrones and principalities," and those we call "seraphim." There is, however, no other way in which these might be made holy except it be from the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit.

Christ, then, although he became sin, remained that which he was, that is to say, he continued to be holy as he was by nature God. Moreover, "he does not give the Spirit by measure," in accordance with what John said.[34] Now, that the death of his flesh, which took place for the destruction of the flesh, was holy and pure, being well-pleasing to God the Father in a manner similar to incense offerings, the law clearly spoke of when it said, *"In the place where they slay the burnt offerings, they shall also slay the sin offering before the Lord."* Christ is a burnt offering, that is, one which is wholly and entirely, and not just partially, dedicated to God the Father as a pleasing aroma. [552] Therefore, he is truly *"most holy."* For in him we have been sanctified, and he is our whole justification, and he is moreover the sanctification of the spirits above, as I said a moment ago.

32. Lv 6.25–29 (6.18–22 LXX).
33. Dt 21.23; Gal 3.13.
34. Jn 3.34.

It says that *"the priest who offers it shall eat it."* Now again observe that, with respect to all its affairs, the church is administered by sacred and divine laws. For those elements that pertain to the sacrifice belong to the one who offers it. Everyone who has been brought up under the laws of the church knows what I mean. That the church of God is the especially fitting place for divine ceremonies[35] and that the mystery of Christ is necessarily performed within it, is plainly indicated when to those matters I have spoken of it adds, *"It shall be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the tabernacle of witness."*

Now at that time there was only one tabernacle in the wilderness and one temple after that, which Solomon built in Jerusalem. And those who offered sacrifices outside the tabernacle suffered death.[36] For the sacred Scripture says, "A man of the people of Israel who slaughters a calf, a sheep, or a goat in the camp, or who slaughters any of these outside of the camp, and does not bring it to the entrance of the tabernacle of witness so as to present it as a gift to the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, blood shall be imputed to that man who has shed blood. That person shall be utterly destroyed from among the people."[37]

Surely then, to wish to reside with ungodly heretics and to cleave to them in fellowship is a lawless act and a profanity under the condemnation of death. For they sacrifice the sin offering outside the holy tabernacle and do not perform the sacred offering in the holy place. For the church is one, just like the temple of old, and the tabernacle was also one, showing forth the beauty of the church by way of figures. We, then, will sacrifice the offering for sin in the holy court, as it were, and we will eat holy flesh; that is, we will be sanctified when we partake of the mystical blessing. For the law bears witness to this when it says, *"Anyone who touches its flesh will become holy."*

Now the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifice equates with the mystical blessing. For it also said, *"When any of its blood is spattered upon a garment, that upon which it was spattered shall be*

35. *hierourgia,* "religious ceremony."
36. Var. "the punishment of death."
37. Lv 17.3–4.

washed in a holy place." So what wonder is it if the spiritual living creature, namely he who was a man, sanctifies, when even those vessels brought for the sacred ritual were sanctified in a manner that was entirely appropriate for them? Accordingly, these vessels were not employed for a common purpose, and that is why some of the vessels were washed and some were shattered. For how can those objects that were used in the divine ceremonies be designated for human purposes?

Also, that the partaking of the meat of the sacrifice is sacred and not applicable to any others except only to those whose habit it is to contend against sin and to be manly in virtue, is signified when it says, *"Every male among the priests shall eat it; it is most holy to the Lord."* Now tell me, did the law decree that the female should be kept from receiving the blessing? [553] We do not say this, for she is sanctified together with us men. But these matters are types and shadows. So through that which is male and consecrated, it aptly signifies those who are manly and consecrated spiritually in Christ. We have been called, then, to partake of the most fragrant sacrifice, as a consecrated and acceptable race, a holy nation, a royal priesthood,[38] "young men and virgin women, old and young together."[39] For in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, but we are all one,[40] sharing in the one loaf, in accordance with what is written.[41]

So come now, and with mouths wide open and with voices that do not cease, let us honor by the giving of praise the King of all and the Redeemer, who is Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the cleansing of the leper

Sin reigned over us and held those upon the earth in its power, because the mind of man was thoroughly set upon evil

38. Cf. 1 Pt 2.9.
39. Ps 148.12.
40. Cf. Gal 3.28.
41. Cf. 1 Cor 10.17.

from his youth,[42] and chose to turn its passions unrestrainedly towards base things, making the prestige of virtuousness to be as nothing. "But God, who is rich in mercy and compassion," as it is written, "on account of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in transgressions, made us alive with Christ, and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places."[43] For we have been richly blessed in Christ with goodness from on high, and we have washed off our ignominious and wholly wretched sin, having been called through faith to sanctification. Moreover, having become partakers of the life that is everlasting, we shall be accepted, and offered up to God the Father as a pleasing aroma. For what the blessed Paul writes is true, that "we are the fragrance of Christ to God."[44] For the sacred word persuades us that, although sin exercised its tyranny over us for a time, we are rid of its defilement, we have rubbed off its filth, and in Christ we have made an end of our former disease.

This is what is written in Leviticus: *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "This is the law of the leper, at the time when he is cleansed: He shall be brought to the priest, who shall come to him outside the camp. And the priest shall examine him, and behold, he sees that the leper has been healed of the plague of leprosy. Then the priest shall order*[45] *that for the one who is cleansed they shall bring two living birds that are clean, some cedar wood, spun scarlet, and hyssop. The priest shall order that they slaughter one of the birds over an earthen vessel, over fresh*[46] *water. And as for the living bird, he shall take it with the cedar wood, the spun scarlet, and the hyssop, and he shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was slain over the fresh water. Then he shall sprinkle the one who is cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and he shall be clean,*[47] *and he shall let* [556] *the living bird go into the open field. The one who has been cleansed shall wash his clothes, shave*

42. Cf. Gn 6.5; 8.21.

43. Cf. Eph 2.4–6.

44. 2 Cor 2.15.

45. Cyril, both here and in the following sentence, writes "shall bring" (*prosaxei*), where the LXX reads "shall command" (*prostaxei*), which is the meaning found in the Hebrew text.

46. Lit. "living."

47. Hebrew: "he shall pronounce him clean."

off all his hair, and bathe in water; then he shall be cleansed. After this he shall enter into the camp, and shall remain outside his house for seven days. On the seventh day, he shall shave off all his hair; he must shave his head, his beard, and eyebrows, and all his hair, and he shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and he shall be clean."[48]

Now at the literal level the text is plain, and if one wished to study it further there is nothing profitable to be gained unless it is interpreted spiritually. So then, suitably transforming the feebleness of the letter into the mystery of Christ, we shall discuss that. It will, however, be helpful for us if a few important words of explanation are stated first. For leprosy is an undesirable disease that affects the bodies of certain people. It is one that is especially rapacious, and always spreads inwards in some way, increasing its effects in the parts of which it has taken hold. So the disease is quite impossible to cure, not responding to the skill of physicians, the treatment of those who are expert in such things. Rather, it only ceases on those rare occasions when nature seems to resist it, and its harmful effects are removed by the help of God.

The law, however, stated that the leper should be sent out of the camp. For when God gave his commandments to the people of Israel, Moses, the instructor of sacred rites, was told, "They are to send every leper out of the camp, and every person with a venereal disease, and everyone who is unclean on account of a dead body."[49] We are not, of course, saying that the law finds fault with bodily diseases. For it would be utterly absurd that those suffering from a disease against their own will, rather than being shown the pity they deserve, should suffer punishment in addition. But those things given through the all-wise Moses in the form of figures were to point to[50] some reality. For whereas leprosy produces deadness in the flesh, sin also affects the soul, and as it penetrates the human mind through dead works, it makes it outright useless and lifeless. So by the dead things of the flesh we evidently mean abominable and profane passions and the desire to set our minds on earthly things. That

48. Lv 14.1–9.
49. Nm 5.2.
50. Lit. "give birth to."

is why we said at the start that when we were dead in transgressions, God the Father made us alive together with Christ.

Therefore, through something that is outwardly visible, the text prepares us for a more subtle[51] interpretation. For the law sends out of the camp those afflicted with leprosy, indicating figuratively that those who are deadened by sin, having minds which are, in effect, marred by various passions, and who suffer greatly from a loathsomeness within their own selves, must be separated from the multitude of the saints and be removed outside the number of the holy ones. For one who is wicked, stained with profanities, should not by any means be gathered with those who are righteous, nor should one having the defilement of sin, which cannot be washed off, be among those who have been sanctified. For "What fellowship is there," it says, "between light and darkness? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?"[52]

So for those who wish to live uprightly, [557] it is necessary for their progress that they take pains to avoid the wicked. The inspired Scripture itself also urges us to do this, for God says to his own people, "Come out, come out from among them, and be separate, you who carry the vessels of the Lord."[53] The vessels of the Lord might be understood as virtues of various kinds. Thus the divine Paul says, "Put on the whole armor of God."[54] So then, portrayed in the figure of the leper is the way in which God keeps the one afflicted and defiled with the disease of sin away from the multitude of the saints.

It was also most certain, however, that some of those suffering from this condition were restored from it. For it is sometimes the case that we cease from sins when we change our thinking and resolve to do and to set our minds on things that are better and more proper. What is the law for? Does it not show the way for those who wish to repent? Does it not open up the gate of salvation? Do not doubt this. For the Master is

51. Or "refined," "detailed."

52. Cf. 2 Cor 6.14–15.

53. Is 52.11. The Harleian Codex lacks the repetition of the initial imperative ("Come out") from the citation.

54. Eph 6.11.

good and loves humankind. Note how he expressly says, "Return, you who are backsliding, and I will heal your wounds."[55] And through Ezekiel he also says, "Repent, and turn from all your lawless deeds, O house of Israel, and they shall not be the cause of your punishment for iniquity."[56] What, then, is the way of salvation? Who is he that delivers those who have sinned from being punished as they deserve? Who is he that redeems and rescues so readily? It is our Lord Jesus Christ, he who gave himself as a ransom for all,[57] and who sanctifies us by his own blood.

2. Observe once more how the mystery is present in the shadows written in the law. For the leper was brought outside the gate to the priest who was ministering according to the law. And when he indicated that the leper had recovered from his disease, and that it had now ceased and come to an end, the requirements for cleansing were carried out, in accordance with the will of the Lawgiver. For two clean birds were taken, with some cedar wood, and spun scarlet, in the form of a thread, and also some hyssop, in the form of a stalk. Then one of the birds was slaughtered over some water, while the other, as we were told just now, was dipped in the water and in the blood of the bird that had died, and it was then released without being harmed in any way. Next the priest, having sprinkled the person suffering from leprosy seven times with the water, set him free from the indictments of the law. So his hair was shaved, and he could then enter into the camp without being reproved, and into his own home after staying outside it for seven days.

Now we who formerly bore the deadness of sin, who were defiled with many forms of wild passions, who were suffering, as it were, from spiritual leprosy in that we went astray and served the creation, were brought to the great, holy, and pure priest, who is God, as the blessed Paul said.[58] And we were brought to him by God the Father. For when speaking to the Jews, Christ

55. Jer 3.22. Cyril omits the word "children," present in both the Hebrew and LXX, from the phrase, "O backsliding children."

56. Ezek 18.30.

57. Cf. 1 Tm 2.6.

58. Cf. Heb 7.26.

said, "Do not grumble among yourselves. No one is able to come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."[59] For God the Father, by his own power, brings those who are afflicted to the Son. For he came to heal the brokenhearted, and to open the eyes of the blind.

If [560], then, we set aside our impotence and weakness in order to perform those things that are well-pleasing to God, let us have a heart given to industriousness, holding fast to works of virtue, and let us pursue the way of life that is glorious and worthy of admiration, acknowledging the one who is truly the Master by nature. Thus we say, in the words of the psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who is gracious towards all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from corruption, and crowns you with mercy and compassion."[60]

Note how the person suffering from leprosy is brought to the priest who has come outside the gate, away from the camp. For it was to us who were cast out, so to speak, abiding in a place outside the holy and sacred city, which is the church of God, that Christ came sharing our likeness. And having come, he made us clean through his holy baptism and his body.[61] For he was slain for us, and showed us a saving remedy—the raising up of himself upon a tree to suffer death itself for us. This is depicted for us in shadows within the sacred Scriptures, for two clean birds were taken. This was, then, a figure of Christ who came from heaven[62] above, as the bird is a creature that flies in the sky. For Emmanuel came down to us out of heaven above, as it says in a certain passage, "No one has ascended into heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of God."[63] The wise John also writes: "He who comes from above is above all."[64]

Now the birds were clean. For the Lord is truly clean and undefiled, knowing no sin. Even though it says there were two

59. Jn 6.43–44.

60. Ps 103.2–4 (102.2–4 LXX).

61. Var. add "and his blood."

62. The Greek word for "heaven" is the same as that used for "sky."

63. Jn 3.13. Cyril puts "Son of God" in the place of "Son of Man," which is the original reading of the verse and is that appearing in the Harleian Codex.

64. Jn 3.31.

birds, however, we are certainly not saying that we understand there to be two Christs. This matter brings us to a learned and necessary consideration. For the Only-Begotten, although he was God by nature, bore the flesh of the holy Virgin, and was indeed composed, as it were, of two, by which I mean his heavenly nature and his human nature, in a way that is ineffable and beyond understanding. Notwithstanding, the Lord Jesus Christ is one. The account, then, in these two birds gives consideration to the coming together of two into one.

As the law regarding the two birds signifies the mystery of Christ in many different ways, it also said that they should take some cedar wood. And this was a figure of his holy flesh, which was not able to suffer corruption. For this wood does not decay.

Hyssop too, being something warm, was a figure of[65] the working of the Holy Spirit, through which we are made zealous[66] in spirit, and the uncleanness in our insides is, after a manner, melted away. For the hyssop stalk is by nature hot and is able to dispel the cold and unclean humors gathered within our bodies. So Christ sets us free, as I said, by the working of the Spirit, from the hidden passions inside our minds. Also the stalk of hyssop is very appropriately placed over fresh water. For we were baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire, in accordance with what is written.[67] So the warm stalk, as I said, is applicable to the working of the Spirit.

Again, the spun scarlet [561] shows in itself the manner in which the Only-Begotten became man. For the Word, although he was God, was intertwined with flesh and blood. The scarlet material, then, represents both blood and flesh, for it looks the same color.

The bird, then, was slain over fresh water in which the remaining bird was dipped, along with the other items, and was then released without suffering any harm, as I have already stated. For Christ was sacrificed for us, yet he himself was both in death and over death. For "he was put to death in the flesh,"

65. Var. "signifies."

66. Cf. Rom 12.11. The word translated "zealous" (*zeontes*) could also be translated "being warm."

67. Cf. Mt 3.11; Lk 3.16; Acts 2.3–4.

in accordance with what is written, "and was made alive in the spirit, in which he also went and preached to the spirits in prison who were disobedient long ago."[68] For insofar as he is apprehended as having become man, he submitted himself to death, but insofar as he is truly life and from life, he showed himself stronger than death.

So the living bird was dipped in the death of the bird that had died. The law is here signifying in a figure that the Word, who by nature is both life and from life, took upon himself the death of his own flesh. For the flesh that he assumed did not belong to another, but was his very own.

Once the leper was sprinkled seven times with the water, he was finally discharged from being counted a leper. So Christ, as I said, declares us pure, sanctifying us[69] by means of holy baptism. For this, I believe, is what the sevenfold sprinkling indicates. The blessed Paul also understood this and said, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more."[70] It is the abundance of grace, therefore, and the bringing about of perfect cleansing, as it were, that is signified by this sevenfold act.

After the leper had been sprinkled, his hair was shaved. For having been cleansed through holy baptism, it is as though we put off those things that sprouted out of the flesh, that is, the innate desires within us, together with our other failings, as if they were in the form of hair. And this is Christ working within us. For the Word is living and active,[71] being so sharp as to cut away sin, freeing the mind from impure passions.

Once the leper was shaved, he then entered into the camp, but not yet into his own home. For when we have been cleansed, as I said, we join with the saints, and henceforth live together with the holy and sacred race. We thus enter into the house of God, though not yet into our heavenly dwellings. For this gift is reserved for the saints in the age to come.

So the one who had been cleansed entered the camp, and having waited for seven days, he then finally entered his own

68. 1 Pt 3.18–20.
69. Var. add "abundantly."
70. Rom 5.20.
71. Cf. Heb 4.12.

home. For after the present age, having received the cleansing through Christ, we shall abide in heavenly dwellings. Each of those who have been sanctified will abide in his own house that has been allotted him. For it is not temporal rewards that shall be conferred upon believers, but their calling and the pledge of the Spirit have regard to the hope of good things, and so in time grace will shine forth, which is the goal of our hope in Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen. [564]

Concerning the synagogue of the Jews that came to fall because of unbelief

1. The great decline of the Jewish synagogue, along with the disobedient and unruly conduct of the Jews, was revealed by God long ago when he said through Ezekiel, "All the house of Israel are contentious and hardhearted."[72] Accordingly, the Savior himself denounced the city that rejected salvation and the perverseness that was within her, saying, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often have I desired to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Behold, your house is left to you desolate."[73] For the God of all was indeed willing to save them by numerous means. But many of them, as they had completely turned aside to an unrestrained behavior and had slighted the heavenly forbearance, were carried away by their wild and terrible ways to destruction and perdition.

So having administered through Moses those laws by means of which it was possible for them to be instructed properly in the knowledge of virtue and to benefit greatly from an understanding of the truth, God later appointed the holy prophets to be of help to them. This was so that they might have other teachers of excellent things, who knew how to direct them

72. Ezek 3.7.

73. Mt 23.37–38. The adjective "desolate," present in the verse being cited, and which also appears in the Harleian Codex, has been supplied.

into a glorious and upright way of life, and into all manner of praiseworthy conduct. Though they ought, however, to have rendered thanksgiving to the God of all, and to have accepted gladly their instructors and to have regarded them as worthy of all honor, and though they should have been especially eager to change for the better and to be guided by a more appropriate voice, they were stubborn and hardhearted and fell into an even worse state of infirmity. Thus they came to ruin, and at this the prophet Jeremiah said, "The house of Israel has fallen, and there is no one to raise it up."[74]

Now let us further consider the matter that is expressed in figures[75] through the words written by Moses. For in Leviticus we read as follows: *And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, "When you enter the land of the Canaanites, which I am giving you as an inheritance, and I put the plague*[76] *of leprosy in the houses of the land of your possession, and the one whose house it is comes and tells the priest, 'It seems to me that there is a plague in my house,' then the priest shall command that everything be removed from the house before he comes to inspect the plague, and so nothing that is unclean shall be in the house. After that the priest shall enter to examine the house, and the priest shall inspect the plague. And behold, if the plague is in the walls of the house, there will be greenish or reddish indentations, which appear deeper than the surface of the wall. Then the priest shall come out of the house to the door of the house, and the priest shall close off the house for seven days. The priest shall come again on the seventh day, and shall inspect the house. And behold, if the plague has spread in the walls of the house, then the priest shall command that they take out the stones in which the plague is present and cast them outside the town, in* [565] *an unclean place. And they shall scrape the inside of the house all around, and they shall pour the plaster that was scraped off outside the town in an unclean place. Then they shall take other scraped stones and put them in the place of the former stones, and they shall take other plaster, and they shall plaster the house. If, however, the plague comes back again and breaks out in the house after the stones have been removed, and after the house has been scraped and replastered, the priest shall go in and look, and if the plague has spread in the house, it is*

74. Cyril seems to have in mind Am 5.1–2.
75. Var. add "beforehand."
76. Or "contamination," "infection."

a persistent leprosy in the house; the house will be unclean. Then they shall pull down the house, its timbers and its stones, and they shall carry all the plaster of the house outside the town to an unclean place."[77]

It next says that anyone who sleeps, eats, or even enters the house, will be unclean, and after that the priest is brought again to make an inspection. It says, *"But if the priest comes and goes in and inspects it, and behold, the plague has not at all spread in the house after it has been plastered, then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, because the plague is cured. And for the purification of the house he shall take two clean, living birds, some cedar wood, spun scarlet, and hyssop. He shall slaughter one of the birds in an earthen vessel in*[78] *fresh*[79] *water. Then he shall take the cedar wood, the spun scarlet, and the hyssop, with the living bird, and he shall dip them in the blood of the bird that was slain over the fresh water, and with them he shall sprinkle the house seven times. So he shall purify the house with the blood of the bird that was slain, with fresh water, with the living bird, the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the spun scarlet. Then he shall release the living bird outside the town into the open field, and so he shall make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean."*[80]

In these matters the whole mystery concerning the synagogue of the Jews and those things that happened to them from beginning to end are clearly revealed to us, as well as those things that would come about through Christ. So we shall now diligently go through each of these things again in detail, as we are able, opening up the earthiness of the literal sense, and we shall bring to light the beauty of the spiritual contemplation contained within it.

2. The leprosy, then, that occurs within the human body is a disease that cannot be cured by the skills of physicians, but it only relents, as with certain other diseases, when it is overcome by the great and almighty hand of God and his all-capable power.

Now once leprosy has taken hold in those suffering from it, their skin looks different from how it was before. For the disease

77. Lv 14.34–45.
78. LXX here reads "over."
79. See n. 46 above.
80. Lv 14.48–53.

is accompanied by a certain difference in color which distorts the natural color, changing it to one that is unnatural, and the appearance of the body is such that one could reasonably suppose that it shows a change of one's inner disposition, and the transition from a good state of being to one that is worse. For it is often the case that many people, when they change from a good manner of disposition to one that is abject, and leave behind the condition that is appropriate to their nature, stain their own soul with various kinds of depravity. It is as though they were holding to two appearances for themselves, for they neither entirely fall so as to lose the good completely, yet neither do they wholly escape depravity and obstinacy. [568]

Seeing, then, that such is the state of affairs that occurs at times within us, and that this tends to be what happens within the sphere of the human condition and disposition, divine Scripture frequently makes use of the one afflicted with leprosy as a symbolic image. When it depicts, as though on a writing tablet, each aspect of their condition, it brings to the fore the character of an individual person. But when it is the intention of Scripture to indicate that such a condition pertains to a nation, a city, or a region, then it brings in the figure of a house, as this includes those who live in it, and so it manifestly depicts a multitude of people. When you hear, therefore, about the house that is infected with a leprous disease, you should interpret it as the whole synagogue of the Jews, who evidently had become irrevocably corrupted by their own passions, and who took no thought whatsoever for the oracles they received from God. Rather, they turned away so that they could do those things which would give them more pleasure than those which would make them more virtuous.

Now when it says the priest is told that a plague of leprosy appears to have broken out in the house, we do not mean that someone goes to the priest who pronounces the law to bring an accusation against the house. Rather, it is as though he were requesting a remedy from a physician for what had come to pass.

So, if we grant that the synagogue of the Jews has become leprous, who, then, is the one that pronounces this condition? Let us consider, as best as we can, who the priest is. Surely the

role of the one making the pronouncement may be assigned to the band of the holy prophets, who declared to the high priest of all and the guardian of our souls, which is Christ, even before he became man, the disease of rebellion that the Jews suffered from. Yet these did not hate the profanity of their ways and their corruption, nor were they overcome by any enmity towards them. Rather, they were overcome by reverence for their Benefactor, and confessing with tears the transgressions of the people together with them, they made entreaty that they be shown mercy despite all.

It is in this connection that we may take what could be described as the deplorable leprosy of the Jews and the way in which the blessed prophet Jeremiah was greatly affected by it, praying in this wise: "Our sins have risen up against us, O Lord. Act for us for the sake of your name, because our sins are many before you. We have sinned against you. O Lord, the hope of Israel, save us in the time of troubles. Why have you become like a stranger in the land, or like one born in the land who turns aside to a resting place? Will you be like a person who is asleep, or like a man who cannot save? Yet you are among us, O Lord, and we are called by your name; do not forget us."[81] Again it says, "Alas, my soul! For the godly person has perished from the land, and there is none that is upright among men. They all quarrel to the point of shedding blood; each one grievously afflicts his neighbor. They ready their hands to do evil."[82] By such lamentations of the prophets we are instructed concerning the leprous condition of Israel.

The priest also gave orders for everything to be removed from the house before he entered to inspect the house.[83] Now it is indeed a most fearful thing when God visits our transgressions, and it is necessary that those who are guilty should be punished. For this reason God, as he is benevolent towards the wicked [569], commands them to seek cleansing and for the infirmity that has befallen them to be removed, and thus also the punish-

81. Jer 14.7–9.

82. Mi 7.1–2.

83. The words "before he entered to inspect the house" have been added from the Harleian MS.

ment that would come as a result of the visitation, as when it says, "Wash your heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem, so that you may be saved. How long will your hard[84] thoughts be within you?"[85] Some might justly consider "hard thoughts," or those which lead to hardship, to be those by means of which we are brought into punishment for our transgressions.

So observe in these matters that the priest gives orders for the causes—those things with respect to which one might reasonably understand a person to undergo punishment—to be removed beforehand.

3. It next says, *"The priest shall enter to examine the house, and he shall inspect the plague. And behold, the plague is in the walls of the house,"* and also, *"Then the priest shall come out of the house to the door of the house, and the priest shall close off the house for seven days."* After this period of being separated off that was benevolently granted, and after the seven days that should follow the earlier cleansing, if the foul condition again manifested itself in the form of leprosy, they appropriately called the priest to take the necessary action, the priest being the one who undertook the role of God in these matters.

So once he had again observed the plague, that is, the symptoms that indicated the presence of the diseased condition, the priest separated off the house for the whole of seven days. And God, as he was grieved, and most properly so, over the abuse of the law on the part of the people of Israel, despite his benevolence sent them all into captivity, delivering them into the hands of the Babylonians for a period amounting to seventy years in all, appointing one day for ten years. It says that the house was shut off for seven days, where a day is reckoned as ten years, in accordance with what was spoken by the prophet Ezekiel: "I have appointed you a day for a year."[86] And this word is confirmed by the angel that made entreaty for the congregation of the Jews in the book of Zechariah, saying, "O Lord Almighty, how long will you show no mercy to Jerusalem and

84. *ponos*, "toil," "labor," "hardship," "trouble."
85. Jer 4.14.
86. Ezek 4.6.

the cities of Judah, which you have disregarded these seventy years?"[87]

It further says, *"The priest shall come again on the seventh day."* You should understand the return of the priest as nothing other than the restoration of the benevolence of God to the nation, as when it says, "Therefore, thus says the Lord: I will return to Jerusalem with compassion, and my house will be rebuilt within it, says the Lord Almighty, and a measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem."[88] Or again, as it says in this place, "How shall I deal with Ephraim? How shall I protect you, O Israel?[89] I will make you like Admah, and like Zeboiim. My heart altogether recoils; I am troubled in my reluctance. I will not act against you according to the fierceness of my wrath; I will not abandon Ephraim to be utterly destroyed.[90] For I am God and not man, the Holy One among you."[91]

Now it says, *"The priest shall come again on the seventh day to inspect the house. And behold, if the plague has spread in the walls of the house, then the priest shall command that they take out the stones in which the plague is present and cast them outside the town."* And after this it states, *"Then they shall take other scraped stones and put them in the place of the former stones."*

So after the [572] sending away of those former people on account of their offenses, God, who tests everything we do, once again gave his attention to the synagogue of the Jews, which was undoubtedly no longer entirely leprous. Although he did not find them to be completely free of their former foul condition, he did not vent his wrath against them all, but only against those who were responsible for bringing them into such a plight and who were the cause of their affliction. These are the ones he describes as "stones," indicating that they are individual parts of the whole house, that is, of the nation. These were some of the kings, who at that time led the people astray

87. Zec 1.12.

88. Zec 1.16.

89. Here the Harleian MS follows the LXX in adding the repetition of "How shall I deal with you?"

90. The verb "destroy" here is the same as that translated as "plaster" in the quotations from Leviticus (14.42, 43, 48) in section 1, above.

91. Hos 11.8–9.

into a different form of worship, and some of the false prophets, who spoke out of their own hearts, as it is written,[92] and weakened the devotion of those who heard them. These are those whom he commands to be removed from the house, meaning that they be separated from it, that is to say, that they be cast out to be destroyed. Such is the meaning of what was spoken by God to Jeconiah: "O land, hear the word of the Lord. Write this man down as an outcast,"[93] and to the false prophets, "For this reason I have cut off your prophets; I have killed them by the word of my mouth."[94] And he further says, "Therefore, the leaders of the people shall be cast out from their luxurious houses; they are thrust out because of their wicked practices."[95] Yet again it says, "Because of uncleanness you have been utterly destroyed."[96]

In bringing in other stones, clean and scraped, to replace those that were removed, it evidently indicates those particular people who in the purpose of God would stand in opposition to the house of Israel and hold it together as a place that was uncorrupted, these clearly being kings, prophets, and holy men. As was spoken by God to the blessed Isaiah: "Thus says the Lord of hosts: Go into the chamber, to Shebna the steward, and say to him, 'Why are you here? And what is your intention here that you have hewn out for yourself a tomb here, and have made for yourself a sepulcher on high and carved for yourself a dwelling in the rock? Now behold, the Lord of hosts will cast out such a man to destroy him, and he will take away your robe and your glorious crown, and will cast you into a great and immense land, and there you will die. And he will bring your fair chariot to shame, and make the house of your prince to be trodden down. And you will be removed from your stewardship, and from your position. And it will come to pass on that day that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and I will clothe him in your robe and give him your crown, and I will commit your authority

92. Cf. Jer 23.16; Ezek 13.3.
93. Jer 22.29–30.
94. Hos 6.5.
95. Mi 2.9.
96. Mi 2.10.

and your stewardship into his hands, and he will be like a father to those who live in Jerusalem.'"[97]

Now it says that *"they shall take other plaster and they shall plaster the house."* (For *"they shall plaster,"* the word *exaleipsousi* has been put here instead of *perialeipsousi*).[98] This signifies the appeal that was made to Israel through the holy prophets, who by their good and wholesome words applied "plaster" to those who were sinning. They persuaded them to come willingly to that which pleases God, and to be rid of the pollution that comes from the passions [573], and rather to seek diligently after those things that the Lawgiver deemed profitable for people who worship him to know. Such is what was spoken to them through one of the holy men: "Seek good and not evil, that you may live; and so the Lord God Almighty will be with you."[99]

Further on, it says,[100] *"If, however, the plague of leprosy comes back again and breaks out in the house after the stones have been removed, and after the house has been scraped and replastered, the priest shall go in and look, and if the plague has spread in the house, it is a persistent leprosy in the house; the house will be unclean. Then they shall pull down the house, its timbers and its stones, and they shall carry all the plaster of the house outside the town to an unclean place."* For once all manner of remedy had been applied to the people of Israel, and when the removal of the infected stones had been of no benefit at all, and it was also seen that the "plastering" carried out by the prophets, that is, their appeal, was unprofitable, then the priest entered in again and made an inspection. So the Only-Begotten came into this world with a body. When he became man, he made careful examination to see how much the synagogue had changed from its previous baseness to an improved manner of conduct. But when he perceived that it was still caught up in the same passions as before, and was infected

97. Is 22.15–21.

98. Cyril here comments on a textual variant in Greek copies of Leviticus. The basic verb is identical in each case, but it is the compounded prefix that varies. This, in actual fact, makes little difference to the general sense of the term.

99. Am 5.14.

100. This short introduction to the scriptural citation has been added from the Harleian Codex.

with a long-lasting impurity, he commanded that it should be pulled down and sent away to an unclean place. For the whole constitution of the Jews that came into being through the law was dissolved, and the nation was scattered to every unclean place, in accord with what was spoken by the prophets: "And I will scatter them to all the winds,"[101] and, "I will shake them out among all the nations."[102] Note this well, and also what was spoken by the Savior concerning the temple that was in their midst: "You see all these things? Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left upon another that will not be thrown down."[103]

It also says, *"Everyone who enters into the house during all the time that it is shut off shall be unclean until evening. And anyone who sleeps in the house shall wash his clothes, and shall be unclean until evening. And anyone who eats in the house shall do the same."*[104] This clearly indicates that everyone who, through a similar way of thinking, joins with the Jews in any way at all will wholly share in their uncleanness.

Then it again brings in the priest to make further examination of the leprous house, for it says, *"If the priest comes and goes in and inspects it, and behold, the plague has not at all spread in the house after it has been plastered, because the plague is cured."* The synagogue of the Jews was indeed demolished since they were unclean on account of their raging against Christ, and they fell out of friendship with God. Although they will remain in this condition for a long time, however, "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in," in accordance with what was said by Paul,[105] they will be shown mercy by Christ. God will then look upon them once more, as he had looked away from them, and in the latter times he will restore them to righteousness, the righteousness that is wholly through [576] faith and love toward him. So he who is the high priest of all will come and will again look upon them, and finding them in a better condition, he will immediately pronounce them clean and accept them. This is in accord with what was spoken through the holy

101. Ezek 5.12.
102. Am 9.9.
103. Mt 24.2.
104. Lv 14.46–47.
105. Rom 11.25.

prophets: "In that day, says the Lord, I will gather her that was cast out, and I will welcome back her who was crushed, even those I rejected. And I will make her who was crushed a remnant."[106] In another passage it says, "For the people of Israel will abide many days without a king or a ruler, without sacrifice or an altar, without a priesthood or revelations. And after these things the people of Israel will return and seek their God and David their king; and they will stand in awe of the Lord and of his goodness in the latter days."[107]

When the priest examines the house infected with leprosy and cleanses it, it says that *"for the purification of the house they shall take two clean, living birds, some cedar wood, spun scarlet, and hyssop."* It also says, *"he shall dip the living bird in the blood of the bird that was slain over the fresh water.* [*So he shall purify the house with the blood of the bird that was slain, with fresh water*]*, with the living bird, the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the spun scarlet. Then he shall release the living bird outside the town into the open field, and so he shall make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean."*[108]

4. Now observe clearly how the whole mystery of our Savior and the cleansing that comes through holy baptism is present in these matters. For it prescribes that two living birds which are clean should be taken, so that through these birds you may understand both the heavenly man and God at the same time, these being in fact two natures, distinct with regard to the properties proper to each one. For when the Word shone forth from God the Father, he was from a woman in respect of his flesh, and yet he was not divided, for Christ is one coming from two. And that is why two birds are taken. Also it is to be understood that both birds, as they are one, are living and clean. For the Word is in himself the source of all life and purity, and the temple[109] obtained from the Virgin holds the Word himself.

106. Mi 4.6–7.

107. Hos 3.4–5.

108. The words in square brackets, omitted here by Cyril, have been added from the LXX for the citation to make sense. Cyril himself includes the missing words in previous and subsequent quotations of the same passage.

109. That is to say, his body (cf. Jn 2.21).

For the body was his very own, and it was not borne by any other. Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ is one.

In addition to the birds it was also commanded that they should take cedar wood, so that by this you may understand the body of Christ to be incorruptible. For cedar wood is immune from decay, so Christ did not experience corruption. In understanding the holy body of Christ to be incorruptible, the matter of his resurrection then appears extremely credible.

The spun scarlet represents confession of our Savior's death. And so in the Song of Songs with regard to the church it says, "Your lips are like a thread of scarlet, my sister, my bride."[110] For as the lips of the church always proclaim salvation through the blood of Christ and command that the one who draws near should make a confession of faith in him, so its lips are suitably likened to a scarlet thread, and its participation in the mystical blessing also involves a proclamation of the death and resurrection of Christ. Moreover, things that we persuade those coming to faith to confess in the first instance, we then bring to holy baptism and to perfection through the blood of the everlasting[111] covenant, as it is written.[112] So by means of the scarlet is signified the confession of faith in the blood of Christ.

Through the hyssop the heat of the Holy Spirit is signified. [577] For this is a warm plant that works against the effects of the cold. Such is the operation and power of the Holy Spirit within us.

It says that the man who purifies the leprous house *"shall take the living bird, the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the spun scarlet, and he shall dip them in the blood of the bird that was slain over the fresh water, and with them he shall sprinkle the house seven times. So he shall purify the house with the blood of the bird, with fresh water, with the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the spun scarlet."* The law again makes it plain that it is in no other way possible for the synagogue of the Jews to be cleansed from the defilement of unbelief and to be rid of the stain of their manifold transgressions, except through the blessing of Christ alone and through the confes-

110. Song 4.3.
111. Var. omit "everlasting."
112. Cf. Heb 13.20.

sion of faith in him, which is brought to its completion and to sanctification in holy[113] baptism.

Note how a complete picture of Christ is represented to us by what is spoken here, and how faith in him and confession of him are both signified. For through the living bird, you are to understand the life-giving heavenly[114] Word, which lives eternally, and through the bird[115] that was slain, you are to understand the precious blood of the temple[116] that suffered, for we say that he suffered in the flesh, even as in his own body. Through the wood that does not rot, it signifies his incorruptible flesh; through the hyssop, the Spirit; through the scarlet, the confession of the blood of the covenant; and through the fresh water, the life-giving grace of baptism, which was clearly represented at the time of our Savior's suffering when his holy side issued forth water with the blood. It is with this water that it says the house was to be sprinkled so that it could be purified. This is in accordance with what was spoken by Ezekiel the prophet: "And I will take you out of the nations, and will gather you from the countries, and I will sprinkle pure water upon you and you will be cleansed."[117] It also prescribes that the house should not be sprinkled just once, but seven times, for "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more."[118]

Then, in addition to these matters, the Lawgiver enjoins that *"he shall release the living bird outside the town into the open field, and so he shall make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean."* We take the aforementioned *"house"* to be a figure of the synagogue of the Jews, that is, of the whole nation. Now we grant that a town is a place that contains many houses. You may understand this to be our own world, which contains many races of men, and it is girded all around by a manner of circular wall, which is the firmament. Furthermore, the wide and clean place of the open field is the world above. So then, through the bird

113. Var. omit "holy."

114. The adjective *ouranion* may also indicate something pertaining to the sky, and so may equally be applied to a bird.

115. Var. "through the blood of the bird."

116. See n. 109 above.

117. Cf. Ezek 36.24–25.

118. Rom 5.20.

being released into the open field outside the town, the Lawgiver is teaching us about the departure of Christ from the world and his ascension into heaven. For although he went to be with God the Father, over us all and over the synagogue of the Jews, he will make atonement, and we will be cleansed. As the most-wise disciple John says, "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins; and not for ours only, but also [580] for the sins of the whole world."[119] Therefore, it was well spoken when Christ said to the Jews, "If you believed Moses, you would believe in me, for he wrote about me."[120] Through him and with him be glory and might to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the fact that Aaron could not always enter the holy of holies

1. The Only-Begotten, although he was God by nature and was from God the Father, brought himself down into our estate, and appeared on earth, as it is written, and lived among us humans. He did this for no other reason than, as the divine Paul says, "that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people."[121] For the law given through Moses, revealed to those of long ago with angels acting as mediators, appointed as priests men who suffered from the common infirmity of human nature, and because of this it was necessary for them to offer sacrifice for their own inadvertent sins as they did for those of the people.[122] "But the word of the oath that came after the law appoints the Son who has been made perfect for ever."[123] "Therefore, he is able to save completely[124] those who come to God through him, as he always lives to intercede for them."[125]

119. 1 Jn 2.1–2.
120. Jn 5.46.
121. Heb 2.17.
122. Cf. Heb 5.5; 7.27–28.
123. Heb 7.28.
124. Or "for ever."
125. Heb 7.25.

So Christ would make atonement, but it was not in any way for himself, as the saying is true that "he committed no sin."[126] Rather, he did it for us. And this the divine Paul made very clear to us when he wrote of him as the one "whom God set forth as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood."[127] Therefore, it says that "he entered into the holy of holies once for all, having obtained eternal redemption,"[128] and, "by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."[129]

It is we who have been saved, and it is he who bore our sins and suffered for us, for he willingly laid down his life for us. Yet he came back to life, for he was by nature God, and he is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father, and he always lives to intercede for the saints, as I just said.

These matters are again expressed by the shadows of the law. How this is so I will make apparent.

It is written in Leviticus: *And the Lord said to Moses, "Say to Aaron your brother that he may not go inside the veil of the sanctuary, before the mercy seat*[130] *which is upon the ark of testimony, at any hour he chooses, or he will die; for I will appear in a cloud over the mercy seat."*[131] For it was necessary that Aaron, since he was appointed to serve as a picture and a type of the priesthood of Christ, should not have access into the holy of holies at any hour he chose, that is to say, at all times, or this would be to misrepresent the beauty of the mystery. For Christ entered once for all, as I said, once he had obtained eternal redemption.

So to permit Aaron to enter into the holy of holies not just once a year but at any time at all would be to transgress the truth expressed in types. God decreed, therefore, that Aaron should observe this command so that he would not die. Now if death was the punishment for the one who disregarded the shadow, and who violated what was a figure of the reality, what,

126. 1 Pt 2.22; cf. Is 53.9.
127. Rom 3.25; var. omit "in his blood."
128. Heb 9.12.
129. Heb 10.14.
130. Or "place of atonement," "atonement cover."
131. Lv 16.2.

then, will the chastisement be for those who err [581] with respect to the reality itself, which is Christ? This in fact is what the Jews who refused to believe in him did when they dishonored him in numerous ways, even though he plainly said, "I am the truth,"[132] that is to say, the fulfillment of the types found in the law. For Christ is the end of the law and the prophets, for this is what the most-holy Paul, an expert in the law, wrote.[133]

Aaron, then, was forbidden to enter the holy of holies at any time he chose, in order that the beauty of the mystery might stand intact and unviolated, and that some light might be cast upon the shadows for us. So there was access just once each year, and this was done in a certain way, and there was no departure from what was proper. God ordained the procedure, saying, *"Thus shall Aaron enter the sanctuary: with a calf of the herd for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. He is to put on the consecrated linen tunic, and the linen breeches shall be upon his body. He is to be girded with a linen sash, and he shall put on a linen cap. These are holy garments; he is to wash his whole body in water and then put them on. From the congregation of the people of Israel he shall take two young he-goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. Then Aaron shall present the calf as his own sin offering, and he shall make atonement for himself and his household.*[134] *And he shall take the two he-goats, and shall set them before the Lord at the entrance of the tabernacle of witness. Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and one lot for the goat to be sent away.*[135] *Then Aaron shall bring forward the goat on which the lot for the Lord fell, and he shall offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell for being sent away, he shall present alive before the Lord, to make atonement upon it, that he may send it away and release it in the wilderness."*[136] So here the manner in which the offering was made has been laid out for us.

Then Aaron offered the calf as a sin offering for himself and his household. When the calf had been slain, and also the ram

132. Jn 14.6.
133. Cf. Rom 10.4; Mt 5.17.
134. Var. omit "and his household."
135. *apopompaios.*
136. Lv 16.3–10.

for the burnt offering as the law prescribed for it,[137] it says, *"He shall take a censer full of burning coals from the altar before the Lord, and he shall fill his hands with fine compound incense. He shall bring it inside the veil, and he shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord. The smoke of the incense shall cover the mercy seat upon the testimony, and he will not die. Then he shall take some of the blood of the calf, and shall sprinkle it upon the altar*[138] *with his finger; he is to sprinkle the blood seven times with his finger."*[139] Then to this it adds: *"And he shall slaughter the goat before the Lord as the sin offering which is for the people, and he shall bring some of its blood inside the veil, and he shall do with its blood as he did with the blood of the calf."*[140] God commanded these[141] things to be done so that atonement would be made for the impurities of the people of Israel and for all their sins.

Now the blood [584] of the calf and that of the ram was not only applied to the mercy seat and the inner part of the tabernacle, that is, the holy of holies, but also to the altar of burnt offerings in the first part of the tabernacle. For it further said, *"And he shall go out to the altar before the Lord, and shall make atonement upon it. He shall take some of the blood of the calf and some of the blood of the goat, and shall put it on the horns of the altar all around. He shall sprinkle some of the blood on it seven times with his finger, and cleanse it, and consecrate it from the impurities of the people of Israel."*[142]

Then it continues: *"And Aaron shall bring forward the live goat, and he shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and declare over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their unrighteousness, and all their sins, and shall put them upon the head of the live goat. Then he shall send it away into the wilderness by means of a man prepared for the task. And the goat will take their iniquities*

137. Cf. Lv 16.11.

138. Var. "upon the mercy seat on the east side, before the mercy seat," following LXX.

139. Lv 16.12–14.

140. Lv 16.15.

141. Var. "all these."

142. Lv 16.18–19.

upon itself into the barren region, and the man shall release the goat in the wilderness."[143]

2. These matters were at that time revealed in figures. Such was how things were, and this is what was also practiced. But since the shadow has passed away, and the time of restoration has been instituted, we shall now, as we apply our minds with the utmost astuteness, transform the object of the law to that which pertains to the mystery of Christ. For our Lord Jesus Christ "entered into the holy of holies once for all, having obtained eternal redemption." Yet this was "by the blood of the eternal covenant," "not through the blood of goats and calves," but "through his own blood," blotting out the sin of the world.[144] For he was slain not on his own account, but for our salvation.

So we shall give special attention to these shadows of the law. Now it was especially appropriate, or rather even necessary, that the divine Aaron should offer sacrifice for his own inadvertent sins. For it should not be understood that as a man he was any better with regard to sin, but in such a matter his correspondence to Christ no longer applies; far from it, in fact. For Christ, since he was God, was eminently sinless in his own nature. It was nevertheless in him and through him, that there came the cleansing of those being sanctified, that is, both of the priests and of the people.

Note how Aaron, in the offerings that were made for him, sets out the figures of the spiritual sacrifice and the spiritual aroma found in Christ. For a calf and a ram were used for burnt offerings. Now by the calf Christ is again to be understood as one. For those things presented to God for the saints are truly immense, and such offerings are exceedingly full in nature. And the calf is a sacred animal which excels all others that are suitable for sacrifice. The calf, then, represents to us the perfect[145] sacrifice. Yet there was also a ram for a burnt offering, for our Lord Jesus Christ was a pleasing aroma to God the Father, as though he were in himself nullifying the abominable and malodorous nature of the sin of the world.

143. Lv 16.20–22.
144. Cf. Heb 9.12–13.
145. Or "complete."

Notice how, when Aaron was instructed to make an entry into the holy of holies at the appointed time and carefully to carry out offerings for his own inadvertent sins, he was not to appear at that time in the attire of his high priestly office. [585] Rather, it says, *"He is to put on the consecrated linen tunic, and the linen breeches shall be upon his body. He is to be girded with a linen sash, and he shall put on a linen cap. These are holy garments; he is to wash his whole body in water."* This was also the usual attire of all the priests officiating under the law.

So how, then, as I see it, should these matters be explained in a reasonable manner for our benefit, or rather what is their true explanation?

Now from the fact that Aaron sacrificed for his own transgressions it does not follow that he should not be seen as a figure of Christ, who knew no sin. For the dress that was especially appropriate for him, the very attire of the high priestly office, typified the beauty of the kingship and priesthood of our Savior.

That it is impossible for anyone to be able to enter into the holy of holies, and also into the true tabernacle, which the Lord set up and not man, without first being cleansed in the water of regeneration,[146] is plainly revealed in the law when Aaron was instructed to wash himself in water, if he was to have access into the holy of holies.

God also commanded Aaron to take coals from the altar and to take them inside, that is, within the veil. He gave instructions that a handful of fine incense should be burned, and when this was done, it says, *"the smoke of the incense shall cover the mercy seat upon the testimony."* This was a figure of Christ, who was sacrificed like a calf, and who was also offered up as a burnt offering like a ram, and who fills the whole of the holy tabernacle, that is, the church, with a spiritual aroma, as we are told, "Your name is ointment poured forth; therefore, the maidens love you. They have drawn you; we will run after you for the fragrance of your ointment."[147]

But we shall now go back to explain things from the begin-

146. Cf. Ti 3.5.
147. Song 1.3–4.

ning. For the unfolding of our thoughts will directly lead to a proper treatment of these matters. So a calf and a goat were led forth as offerings for Aaron, and two goats for the people, as well as a ram as a burnt offering. For it is written, *"he shall cast lots for the goats: one lot for the Lord and one lot for the goat to be sent away."* It is necessary to speak of the nature of the mystery that lies within these things. Now some believe that one of the goats was released in the wilderness as an offering to a certain[148] unclean demon that had been cast out.[149] We, however, say that this opinion consists of nothing but absurd superstition, which may justly be accused of resorting to the false notions of the Greeks. But more than this, and I shall add this without any hesitation, an even greater matter is that we find this view to lead to the inequitable notion that the law is the originator of sin against God,[150] and yet in many different ways it delivers us from the error of polytheism, and shows forth the Lord of all to be one in nature, and is also wont to give instruction pertaining to the knowledge of the truth.

Now one of those people whose practice it is to think in a right manner might directly ask: So why, then, did it command that the animal, namely the goat that had been presented to God, should be separated and sent away as though it were some offering to an evil and hostile power? And also, what [588] importance is there in the act we see Aaron performing when he laid his hands upon the goat and denounced the sins of the people of Israel? So then, should it not be thought that the view in question consists of utter stupidity, or of Greek impiety, and is bound up in perverse thinking? How could there still be any doubt that it is open to such an accusation?

3. What is it, then, that was being done? For two male goats, in good condition and of equal size to each other, were brought forward, both of the same age, of the same color, and suffering no sort of defect. Then two lots were inscribed with the names of the goats, providing the designations that the Lawgiver

148. Var. add "evil and."

149. This is the same adjective (*apopompaios*) meaning "sent away," elsewhere applied to the goat. The term has the additional sense of "abominable."

150. In commanding that an offering should be made to a demon.

thought especially fit to give. One bore the name "Lord," and the other "Sent away." So when the goats received their names, the name of one was *"of the Lord,"* and that of the other *"of the one sent away."* This was on account of the fact that it was to be sent away, for when this name was given to it we do not understand it to be a demon that was called "Sent away," but we take it to be spoken of the animal itself. The "Lord," on the other hand, for this was the name of one of the goats, as I said, was slain in an equally fitting manner. And Aaron consecrated the inner part of the tabernacle with blood, and also the outside part and the altar of burnt offerings upon which they performed sacrifices according to the law. And the other goat, that is, "Sent away," after Aaron had denounced over it the sins of the people of Israel, was sent out into a desolate region.

So Christ is signified by means of both goats, for while he died as a man, he was also sacrificed for us, as though in the form of a goat. For the goat was slain for the forgiveness of sins, and it consecrated the church, which is understood in the figure of the inner part of the tabernacle, as well as those under the law. For, as I said, the altar itself was also consecrated with the blood of the goat according to the law, and "without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater."[151]

Surely, then, there is no perfection under the law, nor does the ministration according to the law have the ability to sanctify anybody. For it is necessarily the case that it is Christ who is able to make perfect, and who by his own blood consecrates those practicing the ministration under the law. Therefore, the divine Paul, with regard to himself and to those called from among the circumcised, in one place says, "We know that a person is not justified by works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we also have come to believe in Jesus Christ,"[152] manifestly so that we might have the justification that comes from him.

Christ, then, was slain for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures. Yet he rose to life again and departed to the region inaccessible to men, that is to say, heaven, carrying away our sins, for in a certain place it says, "He bears our sins, and suffers

151. Heb 7.7.
152. Cf. Gal 2.16.

for us."[153] He, I believe, is the one that was sent away. For he was sent away, as it were, from where we are to the city above, to appear now in the presence of God on our behalf.[154] And this the blessed John affirms to us when he writes, "Little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the atoning sacrifice for [589] our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."[155] For we maintain that in Christ we have been cleansed, and by his wounds we have been healed.[156] And he is an advocate for us, and has gone back[157] into the region where humankind cannot go, of which the wilderness was a figure. For he entered the world[158] to be a forerunner on our behalf, and he has restored the way for us, a new and living way,[159] that enters inside the veil. It is Christ, then, who, in the figure of a goat bearing our sins, was the one sent away.

Now the other goat, as I said, was slain for sins. Yet the identity and resemblance of the two goats in all respects showed that at the figurative level the two were one. This was so because the goat that was slain did not come back to life again, for such an occurrence would have appeared to be miracle-mongering, and nothing else. But the Deity is never ostentatious, even though he is able to perform all kinds of wonders. Thus two goats were especially chosen which had the same spotless appearance as each other, just as was doubtless also done in the case of the cleansing of the leper, where the Lawgiver issued a command saying that two birds should be obtained, of which one was slain and the other released in the wilderness. For by means of innumerable distinct illustrations the law has trained us in the mystery of Christ, through whom and with whom be glory and might to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, now and always, for ever and ever. Amen.

153. Is 53.4.
154. Cf. Heb 9.24.
155. 1 Jn 2.1–2.
156. Cf. Is 53.5; 1 Pt 2.24.
157. Var. "hastened back."
158. Var. "heaven."
159. Cf. Heb 10.20.

BOOK TWELVE: NUMBERS

Concerning Christ and the synagogue of the Jews

THE WRETCHED Jews were found to speak out against Christ with a harsh and crude tongue in numerous ways. [592] One learns, however, from the events that happened that the matter was not to go without their being punished. For although Israel was God's firstborn, and for this reason possessed eminent glory, and while they were beloved and especially chosen, they were made lower than the nations, and were put in last place, or rather were placed among all manner of calamity. This the Lord proclaimed to them beforehand, saying through Hosea, "Woe to them, for they have turned away from me. They are wretched, for they have transgressed against me. Though I redeemed them, they spoke lies against me."[1] There were no words so disagreeable that they did not dare to say them. For they spoke in an ill manner, not understanding what was written: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those that rule it will eat its fruits."[2] Since they raged against Christ, loosening their tongues against him in unrestrained slander, as I just said, so they fell from the hope that is in him, and they doubtless paid no heed to the one who said, "This is your lot and your portion, allotted to you for your disobedience to me, says the Lord."[3]

Now, that the Jews became guilty of the charge of blasphemous speech, and that they would receive punishment for their

1. Hos 7.13.
2. Prv 18.21.
3. Jer 13.25.

bitter raging against Christ, we should most readily allow also from those events recorded in Numbers. There it reads as follows: *Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian wife Moses had taken, for he had married an Ethiopian woman. They said, "Has the Lord spoken to Moses only? Has he not spoken to us too?" And the Lord heard it. (Now the man Moses was exceedingly meek, more than all men who were upon the earth.) At once the Lord said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Go out, the three of you, to the tabernacle of witness." So the three of them went out to the tabernacle of witness. Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the entrance of the tabernacle of witness. Aaron and Miriam were summoned, and they both came forward. And the Lord said to them, "Hear my words. If there is a prophet of the Lord among you, I will be made known to him in a vision, and I will speak to him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my household. With him I will speak face to face,*[4] *in plain view and not in obscurity; and he has seen my glory. So why were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" The great anger of the Lord was upon them, and they departed.*[5] *Then the cloud went up from the tabernacle, and behold, Miriam was leprous, as white as snow. And Aaron looked at Miriam, and behold, she was leprous. He said to Moses, "I beg you, my lord, do not lay this sin upon us, for we were ignorant in the matter of our sin. Do not let her be as one who is dead, like a miscarriage coming out of the mother's womb, with half her flesh consumed." Then Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, "O God, I beg you, heal her!" And the Lord said to Moses, "If her father had only spat in her face, would she not be ashamed? For seven days she shall be set apart outside the camp, and after that she shall come back in." So* [593] *Miriam was set apart outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not move on until Miriam had been cleansed.*[6]

These events are related to those mentioned previously. For they are not very far removed from what was contemplated in those other matters but have a meaning that is of a very similar nature, since they speak of the mystery, and present the shame of the synagogue of the Jews in abusing Christ. So the man-

4. Lit. "mouth to mouth."
5. Some copies of the LXX say "he departed."
6. Nm 12.1–15.

ner of the transgressions differs very little. For the synagogue did indeed become leprous in this way, and became unclean, corrupting itself with many and varied misdeeds. In the events of this passage it formulates for us the charges regarding the continual raging of the Jews against Christ, and depicts their boastfulness and conceit. Yet it also shows the meekness of the one who said, "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble in heart."[7] It presents, moreover, the benevolence of him who judges righteously, and who does not always bring the full extent of his wrath upon those who transgress, but after he wounds he binds up, restoring soundness and good health.

So, as the overall intention of what has been set before us in these matters has been summarized in a few words in this section, we shall now take separately each of the things that are stated and unfold the meaning lying hidden within them. We do this with the help of God, who opens up a door for the word, saying to those who put their hope in him, "I will give you the treasures of darkness; I will open up for you hidden, unseen treasures."[8]

2. Now Aaron and Miriam spoke against the all-wise Moses on account of the Ethiopian woman he had married, and they said, *"Has the Lord spoken to Moses only? Has he not spoken to us too?"* Here were two foolish complaints against Moses—first that he had taken an Ethiopian wife, and second when they said, *"Has the Lord spoken to Moses only? Has he not spoken to us too?"* For the first carries an indictment of breaking the law, while in the second it is said that Moses was not to be placed among the great, nor indeed did he possess any special gift that the others did not have, since God had appeared and spoken to various others also.

So we shall speak of these in order, dealing with the first complaint first. And we shall again transform the things here expressed in figures into the very Christ himself.

Now Moses had in fact taken a wife much earlier, when he made the Midianite woman, the daughter of Jethro, his spouse. And then, when a long time had passed, he married the Ethio-

7. Mt 11.29.
8. Is 45.3.

pian, who was both a foreigner and black. And yet the Lawgiver had plainly declared that the people of Israel's race should not by any means intermarry with foreigners. For this is what is written: "You shall not give your daughter to his son, and you shall not take his daughter for your son."[9]

With regard to this matter the great Moses was judged by Aaron and Miriam to be a transgressor of the law, since in all probability they did not understand that through him the mystery was truly foreordained by way of a type. This is something we shall now make clear as we are able, dealing with the nature of the event particularly with reference to Christ himself, to whom also [596] we shall now apply the person of Moses. For Christ is a lawgiver and a mediator between God and men, as that man also certainly was. And Moses himself also indicated that "the Lord your God will raise up a prophet like me for you from your own kinsmen."[10]

Aaron should be taken as a figure of the Jewish priesthood, and Miriam carries out the role of the synagogue.[11] So the elders of the Jews spoke out against Christ our Savior, and the synagogue also spoke with them, accusing him of transgressing the divine commandments, for they said, "If this man were from God, he would not break the Sabbath."[12] They were also outraged for another reason, because he married a black[13] woman, that is, the church of the Gentiles, and in a way he married her as well as the first woman, the Israelite, which is the synagogue. And it is not difficult for one who is familiar with the gospel writings to perceive that they were enraged because their practice of vain observance was being dissolved, as well as those things which were spoken through Moses in figures.

From the prophets one might very easily gather the proof that Christ would also marry the church of the Gentiles, made black through her darkened knowledge and behavior, as the true light was not yet within her to make her form splendid and

9. Dt 7.3.
10. Dt 18.15.
11. By "synagogue" here Cyril means the larger Jewish community.
12. Cf. Jn 9.16.
13. Var. add "and beautiful."

white. It seems most fitting to me that the light was displayed when the Savior revealed it through[14] the economy of his Incarnation. And so he preached to those who were Samaritan foreigners, and after a certain manner he laid the foundations among them for the beginning of the Gentile church.[15]

But one can very readily see that at that time foreigners remained outside the congregation of Israel. For when Christ sent out his disciples to proclaim the kingdom of heaven, he said, "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."[16] Do you see how he placed those people outside of the sheep of the house of Israel? So his marriage to the Israelite woman, that is, the synagogue, was not yet ended, but he was still pleased to live with her. He then further betrothed to himself, as it were, and married the black foreign woman, which is to say, the church of the Gentiles. This is why he said to the Jews with whom he was disputing, "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold. I must lead them also; and there will be one flock, and one shepherd."[17] It is also most striking how he rebuked them as unbelievers when they expressly asked him, "If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in the name of my Father bear witness of me. But you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep."[18]

Christ has now called his own sheep out of the Gentiles. Indeed, the Jews[19] became greatly enraged and vexed against him, as against one who loved foreigners, and who had no regard for the Deity. Since they looked to the law, they said, "Are we not right in [597] saying that you are a Samaritan, and you have a demon?"[20] For "If you were not," they said with respect to the Samaritans, "a lover of Greeks and of foreigners, you would never mix with Gentiles." And they said, "Unless the de-

14. Var. "fulfilled."
15. Var. "of the call of the Gentiles."
16. Mt 10.5–6.
17. Jn 10.16.
18. Jn 10.24–26.
19. Var. "Pharisees."
20. Jn 8.48.

mon that lives within the Greeks were in you," for they called idolaters demon-possessed because the devil was in them, "you would not consider the transgression of the commandments of the law to be of no account." Yet the things done by Christ were rather a fulfillment of the law,[21] and not a transgression of it, as he said, "I did not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill it."[22] For there was a transformation only of the letter of the law in order to bring out the truth. So the accusation against Christ with regard to the "black woman"[23] and to his seemingly wayward conduct should be taken as corresponding to the charges brought against Moses.

To this we shall further add the closely associated matter of the reproach made against Moses, and shall again transform our understanding of what was stated from type to reality. For it says, *"The Lord did not speak to Moses only, but he has spoken to us too."* These words are prideful, an utterance of vain conceit. Perhaps Miriam and Aaron ought to have more correctly been thinking that they should not too hastily rise to be equal in status to the one who had deservingly heard: "I know you above all others, and you have found favor with me."[24] They ought rather to have devoted to God those gifts[25] which they had been honored to receive, not going beyond the position assigned for them, nor seizing for themselves the honor that was given to Moses. What may be understood for sure is that no benefit came from their extreme arrogance.

Yet our Lord Jesus Christ is also here to be understood, who declared to the Jews the purpose of God the Father that was known to him alone by virtue of his nature, and who said, "I do not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me, he gave me a command about what I should say and what I should speak."[26] And again he said, "The words that I speak are not mine, but those of the one who sent me."[27] Besides this he also

21. Var. omit "of the law."
22. Mt 5.17.
23. Namely, the Gentile church.
24. Ex 33.12.
25. Lit. "thank offerings."
26. Jn 12.49.
27. Cf. Jn 7.16; 14.10, 24.

spoke out against the impious scribes and Pharisees, who were audacious and excessively arrogant over the fact that God had spoken to their fathers, and for this reason chose to disbelieve in Christ. For they said, "We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he is from."[28] Note, then, how what they said shows they knew full well that God had spoken to Moses, for they spoke almost the same words as on that former occasion, yet even more harshly: "Has God the Father spoken to Christ alone, and not to our fathers (at Sinai, that is)?"

It also says, *And the Lord heard it. (Now the man Moses was exceedingly meek, more than all men who were upon the earth.)* Miriam and Aaron took occasion against the meekness of Moses as though it were arrogance. Yet more than this, God was angered that Moses had suffered insult,[29] and he came unbidden to express his just indignation against those who dared to despise his lawful minister, claiming him as his own.

You should also understand that it was so with respect to Christ. For the Pharisees were heedless of the meekness and benevolence that he possessed, to the point of disdain. But one could [600] surely see that they would not escape punishment from heaven. For if one abuses the Son, God the Father will become angry. For, even without being told, he knew through his divine knowledge the words spat out by the Pharisees in their contempt for him.

3. Following these matters it says, *At once the Lord said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Go out, the three of you, to the tabernacle of witness." Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the entrance of the tabernacle of witness.*

The account further indicates that God would be the judge of those who speak against our Savior Jesus Christ, and that he would come down to execute his wrath as a punishment upon those who dared to revile him and to strive after the same honor as himself. Yet the judgment comes wholly through the Son, as it is evidently the case that the one who begat him is not to

28. Jn 9.29.
29. Var. "was silent" (reading *siôpôntos* for *dusôpountos*).

be distinguished from him, according to the words, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me."[30]

When Miriam and Aaron came and stood before the one who judges justly, he said, *"Hear my words. If there is a prophet of the Lord among you, I will be made known to him in a vision, and I will speak to him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my household. With him I will speak face to face, in plain view and not in obscurity; and he has seen the glory of the Lord."*

Moses was specially chosen, and for this reason he was attended with divine visions more than others, and it is well testified that he had the extraordinary ability to hear divine utterances. Yet this is truer with regard to matters pertaining to Christ. For God the Father did not speak in the Son as he had spoken in the prophets. Whereas they were provided by the Spirit with the knowledge of the things they needed to learn, he knew the divine counsels in his spirit without being taught, since he had the wisdom and counsel of the one who had begotten him. Also, while the blessed prophets viewed God's glory through dark figures, since no one had ever seen him, God is in fact seen by him who is by nature his only Son. And so God is perceived in a way that is appropriate for one who is divine. Our Savior himself would testify of this, saying, "No one has seen the Father, except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father."[31]

The Jews then, who held that God had spoken to their fathers, were not acting reasonably, but profanely, when they disdained Christ, who said that he spoke whatever he heard from the Father. For the things given at Mount Sinai were shadows, types, and figures, producing a knowledge of what was being prescribed that was in a way hidden and extremely obscure. But Christ was one who had himself heard the words of the Father, although because of the indispensable need to be understood it was fitting for him to speak in a more earthly manner.

The text also presents the significant distinction between Christ and all others in that *"he is faithful in all my house."*[32]

30. Jn 14.10.
31. Jn 6.46.
32. Nm 12.7; cf. Heb 3.2.

Does this not demonstrate the more individualistic and limited nature of the economy that came through the law and the prophets, while that which came through Christ was more general and universal? For the law brought deliverance to the one house of Israel, but it is not so with Christ, who by his own blood purchases for God the Father the whole world through [601] faith in him, in accordance with what is written.[33]

And so it says, *"Were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"* For something such as this was spoken long ago through the prophet to the impious Pharisees on account of their futile babbling against Christ: "But come here, you lawless sons, you offspring of adulterers and harlots. Whom did you mock? Against whom did you open your mouths? And against whom did you unleash your tongues?"[34] For the Pharisees, in giving license, as it were, to[35] a tongue that fought against God, all the more readily blasphemed matters relating to Christ. Giving vent to their extreme arrogance, they belched forth words without meaning.

Over these people the singer of the Psalms was[36] very much grieved and said, "I said to the transgressors, 'Do not transgress,' and to the sinners, 'Do not lift up your horn. Do not raise your horn on high, and do not speak unrighteousness against God.'"[37] For they did in fact act unlawfully against him whom they should have least of all condemned in such an ungodly manner. They were found lifting up their horn against him, not conceding that Christ alone knew the will of the Father, but rather were themselves affirming boldly what they claimed to know when they said, as was already stated earlier, "We know that God spoke to Moses,"[38] as though this were also the reason they were unwilling to obey Christ.

Then the cloud went up from the tabernacle of witness. And Miriam instantly appeared leprous, and not in a slight way, but she

33. Cf. Acts 20.28.
34. Is 57.3–4.
35. Lit. "loosening the reins of."
36. Var. add "with good reason."
37. Ps 75.4–5 (74.5–6 LXX).
38. Var. add within citation: "but this man we do not know."

was *as white as snow.* For at the raging of the Jews and at their profane exploits against Christ, the divine and pure[39] Being became indignant, and was disposed after a certain fashion to be extremely angered. So he departed from the synagogue in accordance with what was said by Christ: "I have forsaken my house; I have left my heritage."[40] For as the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud, he also departed like a cloud, according to the figure found in the literal sense. And once he had separated himself, as was reasonable, from the synagogue of the Jews, it was immediately seen to be unclean, and not unclean in a slight manner, but it was diseased to an extreme degree. For when it says that the one afflicted with leprosy was made exceedingly white, it refers to the intensity of the disease. What is there that is whiter than snow?

For it was indeed fitting, or rather it was necessary and beyond question, that the synagogue of the Jews, which fell away from the care of the one who preserved it, should come into all manner of calamity. Therefore, the wild horde of those who loved to ridicule and mock was punished with uncleanness and shame, in accordance with what was justly said to God by the saints: "Fill their faces with shame, that they may know your name is the Lord."[41]

Although Aaron along with Miriam criticized Moses, it was advantageous that he should not be made leprous, even though he deserved to receive the same punishment from him who judged. For as the matter of priestly service was great and valuable before God, it was for this reason he escaped being infected with leprosy. Rather, he was punished by the affliction of the woman who was suffering for this matter, according to what was spoken by God, "Gird your loins and wail, O priests; mourn, you who serve at the altar. [604] Enter in sackcloth, you that minister to God, for the grain offering and drink offering are withheld from the house of our God."[42]

39. *akêratos,* "unmixed."

40. Jer 12.7.

41. Cf. Ps 83.16 (82.17 LXX). In the latter part of the verse Cyril differs considerably from the LXX, which says, "and they will seek your name, O Lord."

42. Jl 1.13.

Aaron further said to the all-wise Moses, *"I beg you, my lord, do not lay this sin upon us, for we were ignorant in the matter of our sin."* For those who were of the race of Israel, who were not strangers to the nature of the synagogue of the Jews according to the flesh, and who were appointed as keepers of the mysteries of our Savior, these would offer up prayers on behalf of those who had sinned in ignorance, even though they had stumbled with them in the first place. They besought Christ that they not be subject to the wrath of the Father, which very thing Paul did when he said, "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them[43] is that they may be saved."[44] Yet he was saying this as a steward of the mysteries of God, and as a minister of the divine proclamation, which Aaron also was at that earlier time.

Now when Moses cried out on behalf of her who was stricken with leprosy, entreating for her to be healed, God deferred his consent, saying, *"Let her be set apart for seven days outside the camp, and after that she shall come back in."*

4. This account shows us as though in a picture that while the divine nature is quick to show mercy, and is in some way most ready to be entreated, yet it is hardened by the frequency of our failings or by their magnitude, and holds back from showing benevolence towards the guilty.

And the account, as we understand it, also indicates that much intercession by the saints went up to God on behalf of Israel. But since it could not be entertained that he should have seen fit not to punish them, that they should not have been condemned for whatever it was they happened to have done, he extended a second measure of mercy following the punishment. From these events, then, it is not at all difficult to see that God is often provoked through our errors with the result that even the benevolence of his especially loving and most peaceful nature is sometimes slow to act.

The future slaughter that would take place in the country of the Jews was revealed to Jeremiah the prophet through the Holy Spirit, when they would be ravaged by the military action of the Babylonians. Since it was presented as though many had

43. Var. "Israel."
44. Rom 10.1.

already fallen and were seen dead, God said to the holy prophet, "Woe is me, for my soul faints because of those who are slain. Run about in the streets of Jerusalem, and see and consider, and seek out in its open places, if you can find a man, if there is anyone that executes justice, and pursues faithfulness, and I will pardon them, says the Lord."[45] Note here how God is grieved over the slain, and how he is ready and willing to have mercy upon Jerusalem. Yet he in effect restrains himself and holds back the divine peaceableness on account of the extreme degree of sin. He nevertheless seeks the opportunity to show compassion, with the intention that even for the sake of one man he would lay aside the expression of his wrath, for he appointed[46] those who had a will to do so to prove there was one faithful man in the city.

So because she had been afflicted with leprosy, Miriam was cast out, but it says that *the people did not move on until Miriam had been cleansed*. For we who believe in Christ likewise wait for the cleansing of the Jews, namely the cleansing that comes through faith. And then, leaving [605] behind the dwellings[47] we inhabit in this present life, we will thereafter move into the heavenly city and hasten on to the promised land. The Savior therefore speaks truly when he says to the Jews, "If you believed Moses, you would believe in me, for he wrote about me,"[48] through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, now and always, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning those who spied out the promised land

There is indeed a special portion for those who choose to love God, the King of all. The creation of things that are good beyond our comprehension has been prepared for them. The

45. Jer 4.31–5.1.

46. Here in place of the awkward *dieplatteto* ("he formed") we follow the Latin column of PG 69 (*jubebat*) in reading the verb rather as *dietatteto* ("he appointed," "ordained").

47. Or "tabernacles," "tents."

48. Jn 5.46.

blessed prophet Isaiah gave assurance of this when he said, "There is an inheritance for those who serve the Lord."[49] And again he said, "You will put your trust in the Lord, and he will bring you up upon the good places of the land, and feed you with the inheritance of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken these things."[50] Surely the promise is true and absolutely sure, for God does not deviate from the truth nor does he ever utter a lie, but he wholly fulfills what has been promised. Knowing this, the divine singer of the Psalms spoke in this manner: "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance;[51] you are the one who restores my inheritance to me."[52]

Who, then, are those who serve the Lord? Or to whom does such a splendid and precious portion fall? They are those who are eager to perform what is pleasing to God, who know how to press on unfalteringly so as to obtain all of these wonderful things, and who are resolved[53] with the utmost determination to overcome all that oppose. This they do not do by their own powers, nor by putting their trust in their own skill, but they hold to the grace from above as their armor, having the God of all as their commander and fellow-soldier. Being so disposed, they say, "I will not put my hope in my bow, nor will my sword save me. For you have saved us from those who afflict us, and you have put to shame those who hate us."[54]

Now those who are good and strong-spirited, and who are more ready to believe, God will make most eminent, apportioning to them good gifts with a generous hand. But those who have chosen to be infected with the most shameful affliction of all so as to disobey,[55] he will drive out from the congregation of his chosen people, and separate them from everything that is able to bring happiness. And in the presence of each of them

49. Is 54.17.
50. Is 58.14.
51. Var. add "and of my cup" (as LXX).
52. Ps 16.5 (15.5 LXX).
53. Var. "eager."
54. Ps 44.6–7 (43.7–8 LXX).
55. Var. add "and who, being carried away by weakness, engage together in unrestrained and excessive pursuits."

he will declare, as will be most proper, "This is your lot, the portion allotted to you for your disobedience to me."[56]

We find that the Jewish people came under such charges as these. For this reason they have fallen from the hope and have lost a share in their inheritance, even though it belonged to them, since it is true that the promises are theirs in accordance with what the blessed Paul says.[57] And as they disobeyed the one who called them to these promises, they remain without a portion, and according to the words of the Savior: "The last became first, and the first last."[58]

This also was announced to us beforehand in the most ancient Scriptures. There it reads as follows: *And after these things the people moved on from Hazeroth* [608] *and encamped in the wilderness of Paran. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Send men to spy out the land of the Canaanites, which I am giving to the people of Israel as a possession; one man for a tribe. You shall send them out according to their families, all of them leaders." And Moses sent them out from the wilderness of Paran at the word of the Lord; all of the men were leaders of the people of Israel.*[59]

These men selected from the tribes, twelve in number, were separated from the multitude of others. They then went up and spied out the land to see whether the soil was rich or poor, to see if it had good pasture land, and whether it was highly productive or dry and fruitless, to see if the land gave growth to cultivated trees and produced fine crops, or if the fields were able to grow tall when unattended. In addition to this they looked to see what the inhabitants were like, whether they were fearsome in courage and successful in battle, showing no leniency to those they encountered, or whether they could readily be conquered by those who exercised bravery. They also looked to see what the cities were like, whether they were undefended and without walls, or fortified with towers. Moses further instructed that they should also pick some of the fruit to bring back as a form of proof.

56. Jer 13.25; var. add "says the Lord," at the close of the citation.
57. Cf. Rom 9.4.
58. Cf. Mt 20.16; Mk 10.31.
59. Nm 12.16–13.3.

So the men went up and hastened to carry out what they had been commanded. For the requisite period of time they spied out the land, and they also picked a cluster of grapes, one that was extraordinary and such as they had not seen before, truly wondrous and luxuriant. Then they returned to Moses. Nevertheless, they were divided in their opinions. They all thought it proper to declare how good and rich the land was, and as evidence of this they had brought with them the fruit that had been taken from it. Yet at the same time they described the nation that occupied it as bold, strong, and extremely warlike, not disposed to yield easily to any others in their contempt for them. *"For we found,"* the spies said, *"the sons of the giants there."*[60] They were so tall and huge, I imagine, that they made the people of Israel seem like locusts in comparison. But Caleb and Joshua expressly spoke of how good and rich the land was, and said, *"If the Lord chooses us, he will bring us into it."*[61] So they also affirmed that with God fighting for them they would be able to succeed in the task.

When, however, the people of Israel heard these things, the great mass of them immediately put God from their minds, forgetting the signs done in Egypt; and being overcome with much fear, they were reluctant to fight and started a rebellion. They were no longer desirous of what had been promised, and gave no thought for the almighty and irresistible hand of him who was helping them. At that moment they cried like children, and thought their wives and loved ones would be destroyed by the sword in battle. They were even so bold as to say that their servitude in Egypt had been better for them, and the burden of slavery more endurable. Shedding many tears, they exclaimed that they ought to go back down to the Egyptians, and so they stirred up Joshua and Caleb[62] to a brave response, even though the people stamped in the dust and [609] sought to stone them.

When the wretched affair reached this point, however, *The glory of the Lord,* it says, *appeared in a cloud over the tabernacle of*

60. Nm 13.33.
61. Nm 14.8.
62. Var. omit "and Caleb."

witness, among all the people of Israel.[63] Indeed God intended to destroy them all utterly without a second thought. But when Moses prostrated himself and made entreaty for them, God only just relented. For it says, *The Lord said to Moses, "I pardon them, according to your word. Nevertheless, as I live and as my name lives, the glory of the Lord shall fill all the earth. For all the men who see my glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in this wilderness, and have tested me this tenth time and have not paid heed to my voice, they will surely not see the land which I swore to their fathers; but their children who are with me here, all who know neither good nor evil, every inexperienced youth, to them I will give the land. None of those who have provoked me shall see it. But my servant Caleb, because he had a different spirit in him and he devoted himself to me, I will bring him into the land into which he entered,*[64] *and his offspring will inherit it."*[65]

Note, then, that the charges God made against this disobedience were extremely serious. It was necessary, therefore, that those who had succumbed to it should bear a severe penalty. So we find, as we bring the new teachings alongside the more ancient Scriptures, and show forth the reality corresponding to the shadows, that Israel would indeed suffer in such a way.

Now Moses compelled those who had been chosen from all the tribes to go and carefully spy out the promised land. Yet when they came back and stood there, some of them, ten in number, spoke disparagingly. At one and the same time they put fear into the whole congregation and were the cause of a profane unbelief. But the two other men, Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua also, thought it good to speak well of the land, expressly exclaiming that it was rich and fruitful, and had very fertile fields. Yet the people failed to accept the promise. These two men, however, were made heirs of a heavenly portion, and were honored by God.

2. So now it is necessary to discuss what manner of true and spiritual contemplation is here.

Throughout the books of Moses, whether with regard to the

63. Nm 14.10.

64. Here following the reading of the LXX, preserved in the Harleian Codex, rather than the erroneous "I entered."

65. Nm 14.20–24.

good things prefigured in them by sacred types,[66] or with regard to the holy land promised to[67] the fathers, the interpretation the Jews give to these matters has been put to one side, so to speak. For in the writings of the law one can see foreshadowed in figures the mystery of Christ, the sanctification in the Spirit that comes through him, and the hope that is promised to the saints. For the lamb was slain by the people of Israel in Egypt, they were anointed with its blood, and the Destroyer was restrained. And so, that death would be overcome by the death of Christ, and that corruption would henceforth pass by those anointed with the Holy Spirit, were proclaimed in shadows beforehand. And nothing less than the fact that we would lay hold of the happy estate given at the beginning and that man would be restored to the paradise of delight was also shown forth [612] in the law.

Now it prescribed that a feast should be kept in the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, and that they should take in their hands the branches of palm trees, the fruit of goodly trees, the leafy boughs of trees, and willows and chaste trees.[68] It did not simply command these to be taken, but also that the first day should be designated a holy convocation and the seventh day as well.[69] This matter showed indirectly that paradise was established at the first period of time, at the beginning of the human race, that is to say, for Adam. And so it shall likewise be established at the last period of time, that is, at the completion of the present age, of which the final day, the seventh, was an especially obvious figure. So the first day was holy and also the seventh. For the period of time was holy within which our forefather Adam kept the commandment that was given him. So also the period of time at the end is holy. For we have been made holy in Christ, having been set free from the charge of sin, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit.

66. Var. add "which allowed, in effect, a careful examination of what had been promised."

67. Var. add "and prepared for."

68. Cf. Lv 23.39–40.

69. Cf. Lv 23.35–36. The biblical text actually speaks of the first and eighth days of the Feast of Tabernacles. Possibly Cyril has confused this with the first and seventh days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (see Lv 23.7–8).

So by means of type and shadow, namely the significance found in the writings of the law, Moses in effect sends forth those who are more ready to learn and who have, as it were, a special kind of mind, so that they should carefully explore the things promised by God. Seeing that for those who wish to obtain the good things which are so awe-inspiring and glorious, "the fight is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers and authorities, and the cosmic powers of this present age," in accordance with what is written,[70] those who mind the things of the flesh, who give greater value to pleasures which are temporal and things which will eternally perish, refrain from the fight.

Note too that the men of Israel speak out here and there with the voices of the chosen people concerning their dear women and children, overcome as they are with fear for such and with wretchedness.[71]

Consider also those who, because of what the Jews said, failed to come to faith at the time of the advent of Christ, the Savior of us all. For our Lord Jesus Christ has freely given the kingdom of heaven to those who believe. Yet he called them to be courageous, in the spiritual sense that is. He also exhorted those who had put their trust in him that it was proper for them to overcome well and truly the oppression of the devil, saying, "Behold, I have given you authority to trample upon snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy."[72]

But the Jews did not wish to believe, preferring what was earthly[73] to the love of God. For when they were invited to the wedding feast, it says that every one of them began to make excuses. One said, "I have bought a field"; another, "I have married a wife, and am not able to come."[74] Do you see how they shared common passions? Do you see how they suffered from related afflictions? Surely then, the scribes and Pharisees, in not being willing to enter into the divine promise, nor permit-

70. Cf. Eph 6.12.
71. Var. "and with godless reasoning."
72. Lk 10.19.
73. Lit. "bodily."
74. Cf. Lk 14.18, 20.

ting others to do so, were in a way decrying the promise. So it is that they were told, "Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter in yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering in."[75] For the people were perishing under the direction of those who led them. Thus God said in a certain place through the mouth of the prophet, "The shepherds have become foolish, and have not sought the Lord; [613] therefore all the pasture has failed, and the flocks have been scattered."[76]

So then, the great multitude of the Jews turned their backs on the promise and are without a share in the grace of Christ. Yet a remnant has been saved through Christ. Of this Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua were plainly a figure. These men spoke numerous things to the people of Israel, urging them to act courageously, describing the land as good and rich, and declaring that they could overcome the nations. But they almost lost their lives, for it says, *The whole congregation meant to stone them*.[77] They were nevertheless appointed by God to receive an inheritance.

Who Caleb is, then, is clearly shown by his name. For its meaning is "all heart,"[78] and Jephunneh means "conversion."[79] So surely those who have a heart that is perfect with God are "sons of conversion" that stand with Joshua.[80] Also these are those who came to believe, who were considered as being firstfruits by the holy apostles, the men that called Israel, and who are to be understood as comprising the remnant. And in calling them the apostles exposed themselves to danger. Yet they were appointed to receive the holy land as an inheritance. And that the "sons of conversion," namely those who have turned from the commandments of the law to the worship and grace that comes through faith, have obtained a heart that is, as it

75. Lk 11.52.

76. Jer 10.21.

77. Nm 14.10.

78. The name "Caleb" would seem to mean "dog," though if taken as a compound of two separate words it might possibly allow the meaning "all heart."

79. Or "turning about."

80. See n. 84 below.

were, wholly perfect with God, one might learn from what Paul wrote plainly. For he counted the things of the law[81] to be like rubbish, and reckoned them as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing God,[82] in order that he might gain him and possess his righteousness.[83]

You may properly understand, then, that Israel would indeed fall away from the promise, but would not entirely perish, as a small portion would be saved. This, I believe, is the remnant, as I have already said. So you see Caleb being brought into the land through the promise of God, alongside the one with whom he was, as it were, yoked together, this being the one who saves, for this is what "Joshua" means.[84] Thus the divine angel Gabriel, when he came to the holy Virgin and announced the good news of how the Only-Begotten would become man, said, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High."[85]

It was, therefore, only the remnant of the synagogue of the Jews that inherited the promise and entered into the sacred land. Much more than this, the new[86] people of God, those who are so through faith, have joined together with the remnant. For the God of all promised to bring into the land with Caleb every young child. The divine David signified this to us when he said with regard to the inheritance of the saints, "Let this be recorded for another generation; and the people yet to be created shall praise the Lord."[87] For the inheritance was laid up not for those instructed by the law, but for another generation. And who is this other generation? It is, as I said, the newer people of God who are so through faith, for we were created in Christ for newness of life, having put off the old man with

81. Var. "world."

82. The New Testament passage alluded to (see following footnote) speaks rather of "knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."

83. Cf. Phil 3.8–9.

84. This name (*Iēsous*) of course being identical with "Jesus."

85. Lk 1.30–32.

86. The Greek adjective for "new" (*neos*) may also mean "young."

87. Ps 102.18 (101.19 LXX).

its passions and desires.[88] And Christ is said to create the two peoples into one new man, [616] thus making peace, and reconciling both in one Spirit to the Father.[89] Surely then, the children[90] who were brought into the land with Caleb were a figure of this new people. And it was to these that the divine disciple wrote, "As newborn babes desire the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow with respect to salvation, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good."[91]

That the divine Paul also understood the things in the law in this way, and transformed the figure found in the letter to the reality, you may clearly learn as he wrote to the Hebrews, "Just as the Holy Spirit says, 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested and tried me, and saw my works. For forty years I was angry with that generation, and I said, "They always go astray in their hearts; they have not known my ways." So I swore an oath to them that they would not enter my rest.'"[92] And in order that we ourselves, repudiating such accursed unbelief and removing it far from our souls, should also be found to be heirs of the promise, he further declares, "Take care, brothers, that none of you ever has an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, while it is called 'today,' so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold the confidence we had at first firmly till the end. When it says, 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion,' who was it that heard and rebelled? Was it not all those who came out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses? And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not those who had sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to

88. Cf. Eph 2.10; Rom 6.4; Col 3.9; Gal 5.24.
89. Cf. Eph 2.15–16, 18.
90. Lit. "babies."
91. 1 Pt 2.2–3.
92. Heb 3.7–11.

those who did not believe?[93] So we see that they were not able to enter because of their unbelief."[94]

As an unrestrained nature and a refusal to submit to the divine commands brought about a deprivation of hope for those who wished to pursue such a course, and did not to any degree promote the opposite virtue, Paul prevails forcibly upon us and says, "Therefore, as a promise of entering his rest still remains, let us take care that none of you should seem to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the good news preached to us, just as they did. But the word they heard did not profit them because it did not meet with faith in those who heard. For we who believe enter his rest,"[95] we who believe in the Savior and Redeemer of us all, which is Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever. Amen.

That Christ became our bread of life

1. The divine prophet Jeremiah, when rebuking the Jews' love of knowledge, most reasonably said, "How can you say, 'We are extremely wise, [617] and the law of the Lord is with us'? In vain the scribes have used a false pen. The wise men are ashamed and alarmed, and are taken away, because they rejected the word of the Lord. What wisdom is there in them?"[96]

For even though the scribes and Pharisees were greatly puffed up and had an arrogant attitude on account of their knowledge of the laws, and though they looked down haughtily upon the mass of the people, yet being both foolish and stupid, and suffering greatly from simple-mindedness, they were reproved by their own actions. For they rejected the heavenly wisdom from above, the Word which came forth from God the Father, "who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption."[97] Therefore, they became

93. Or "did not obey."
94. Heb 3.12–19.
95. Heb 4.1–3.
96. Jer 8.8–9.
97. 1 Cor 1.30.

base and senseless, dull and blind, as the Savior himself said.[98] So as they spurned the divine Word and removed the life-giving grace far from them, grieving God by their great disobedience, they were condemned in many thousands of ways and perished in a famine. And this was what was spoken by God through the prophets:[99] "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will bring a famine upon the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the word of the Lord. And the waters will be stirred up from sea to sea, and from the north to the east people will run seeking the word of the Lord, but they will not find it."[100]

Since those who should have possessed this word in great abundance rejected those things that were most wholesome, they received divine punishment as their lot. They suffered the loss of that which was most noble of all, by means of which they could have become rich, as it were, with the good things from above. Those who chose to disobey, who profanely insulted the wonderful divine grace, were afflicted with a famine of divine instruction, and very much so, as was fitting. But for us who believe, Emmanuel has become the bread of life, "the bread that came down from heaven and gives life to the world."[101] In him and through him we divest ourselves of the hateful[102] power of surpassing corruption, and put on the heavenly grace from above, namely our incorruption, and so we have been brought to God the Father, resplendent and holy.

And having been richly blessed in such a way, why should we not continue to be so in the world? The letter of the law instructs us in this matter with such cogent arguments. It reads as follows: *And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter into the land to which I am bringing you, then it shall be that when you eat from the food of the land, you shall set apart a special offering to the Lord. From the first of your dough you shall set apart a loaf as an offering from the threshing floor,*

98. See Mt 23.17.
99. Var. "prophet."
100. Am 8.11–12.
101. Jn 6.33.
102. *theomises,* meaning either "hated by God" or "God-hating."

so you shall set it apart, even the first of your dough, and you shall give it as an offering to the Lord throughout your generations. But whenever you commit a sin and do not perform all these commandments which the Lord spoke to Moses, as the Lord God instructed you through Moses from the day which the Lord appointed for you and onward throughout your generations, then if [620] *it was committed unintentionally, without the knowledge of the congregation, the whole congregation shall offer a calf from the herd without blemish as a burnt offering, a pleasing aroma to the Lord, together with its grain offering and drink offering, as prescribed for it, and a kid of the goats as a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for the whole congregation of the people of Israel, and they shall be forgiven, for it was unintentional; and they have brought their gift, a burnt offering to the Lord for their sin before the Lord, for their unintentional sins. So the whole congregation of the people of Israel shall be forgiven and also the foreigner*[103] *who resides with you, because all the people were involved in an unintentional sin. If one person sins unintentionally, he shall bring a she-goat, one year old, as a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for the person who acted unintentionally, who committed an unintentional sin before the Lord, to make atonement for him; and he shall be forgiven. For both the native-born among the people of Israel and for the foreigner who resides among them, there shall be one law for anyone who commits a sin unintentionally."*[104]

This is what is found in Numbers, but in Leviticus the mystery takes on a different form, though the matters presented for spiritual contemplation are not greatly dissimilar. So we shall make mention of these things also, since it is extremely important for us to understand them, and we shall weave together, as it were, the exposition of the two into one.

It is further written: "And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the first of the sheaves of your harvest to the priest. And he shall raise the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you. On the day after the first day the priest shall raise it. And

103. Lit. "proselyte."

104. Nm 15.17–29. The citation in the Harleian Codex does not extend so far, stopping in the middle of v. 25.

on the day when you bring the sheaf you shall offer a one-year-old lamb without blemish as a burnt offering to the Lord. And you shall offer its grain offering, two tenth measures of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering to the Lord as a pleasing aroma to the Lord,[105] together with its drink offering, a fourth of a measure of wine. You shall not eat bread, or new roasted grain, until this same day when you present the offerings to your God. It is a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings.'"[106]

2. There was, then, a sheaf serving as the firstfruits of the crops and a symbol of new productivity.[107] A loaf of bread was also made from grain that had been harvested, heaped up, and also perhaps laid up in storehouses. So an offering was dedicated to God by those who would then be inhabiting the promised land. It commanded these things to be done so that both might be understood as indicating Christ. He is indeed the life-giving bread from heaven, and also the firstfruits of the dough for those being restored to newness of life in him.

Now Adam was the firstfruits of the older lump of dough, but as he disregarded the commandment that was given, he fell into transgression. And in him the human race was immediately placed under a curse, and sentenced to death and corruption. Christ, however, was the firstfruits of the second lump of dough. He was free of the curse evidently through becoming a curse for us himself. And he overcame the power of corruption through himself being "left alone among the dead."[108] For having trodden down death, he came back to life again. [621] He was, in effect, both a wonderful dedicatory offering and a bringer of gifts, and was in a kind of way the firstfruits of humanity, since having been made new with regard to incorruption he ascended to the Father. So in the bringing of the bread into the sacred tabernacle and in the dedication of it to God in the holy of holies, it quite appropriately indicates Emmanuel's return into heaven. For he did not ascend into any place

105. Var. omit "as a pleasing aroma to the Lord."
106. Lv 23.10–14.
107. Or "vigor," "fruitfulness."
108. Ps 88.5 (87.5 LXX). The phrase is literally "free among the dead."

made by human hands, nor into the copy of those things that are real, but into heaven itself, now to appear before God on our behalf, in accordance with what is written.[109]

That Christ is indeed the life-giving bread which came from heaven above you can well understand. Moreover, that he also does away with our sins and frees those upon the earth from their transgressions committed in ignorance, having made himself a pleasing aroma to God the Father for our sakes, you can equally understand, if you see him in your mind's eye as a calf sacrificed as a burnt offering, and as a goat offered for the ignorant faults of the people, for, as it is written, "Who can understand his transgressions?"[110]

Note how he who established the legal ministration clearly described the cleansing that comes through Christ as being incomparably superior to the ministration of the law. For if you transgressed the precepts of Moses, it says, and some did neglect to keep the ordinances of the legal ministration, it is then you find that the passing over of the offense is granted through the shedding of blood when a calf was sacrificed or a goat offered. Yet this was figurative of Christ. So while the law determined the punishment for transgressors, it is the precious blood of Christ that delivers us from punishment and sets us free from condemnation due to sins committed in ignorance. For he laid down his life for us so that he might do away with the sin of the world. In the loaf of bread, therefore, Christ is understood as life and the giver of life, while in the calf he is further considered as a burnt offering, dedicating himself as a pleasing aroma to God the Father. Also, in the form of the goat he became a sin offering for us and was slain for our sins.

The sheaf might again be interpreted in another way. And what this is shall be stated as far as possible. One might in fact liken the human race to ears of wheat in a field, like something that rises up from the earth, which remains for the full duration allotted for it and is then cut down at the time when death comes to reap it. Thus Christ also said to his holy disciples, "Do not you yourselves say, 'There are four more months and then

109. Cf. Heb 9.24.
110. Ps 19.12 (18.13 LXX).

comes the harvest'? Behold, I tell you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are white for harvest. The reaper is already receiving a reward and gathers fruit for eternal life."[111]

Surely then, as I just said, the produce in the field is very much like people upon the earth. And Christ became one of us, springing forth from the holy Virgin like an ear of grain. Also note that he described himself to us as a grain of wheat, saying, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."[112] So he was an offering dedicated to the Father for us, a kind of sheaf, like the firstfruits from the earth, which is attested as being fruitful through the things that it brings forth. [624]

Now an ear of grain is certainly to be understood as being one, just as we ourselves, while we are not one ear of grain, are nevertheless brought together as a sheaf, that is, many ears bound into one. And this matter is necessary for our profit, and one that furnishes a figure of the mystery. For Jesus Christ is indeed one, yet he is also to be understood in the form of an abundant sheaf, and he is so because he possesses all believers within himself as regards their spiritual union. Otherwise, how could the blessed Paul write, "We have been raised up together with him and seated with him in the heavenly places"?[113] Since Christ is one of us, we have become fellow members of his body, and we have been richly blessed in our union with him through his body. Therefore, we say that we are all in him. And so he himself in a certain place says to God the Father in heaven, "I wish that, as you and I are one, so too they may be one in us,"[114] just as "whoever is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him."[115] Christ, then, is like a sheaf, containing us all within himself, as it were, and dedicating himself on behalf of us all, being the firstfruits of a humanity made perfect by faith and destined to be brought as treasure into heaven above.

111. Jn 4.35–36.
112. Jn 12.24.
113. Cf. Eph 2.6.
114. Cf. Jn 17.11, 21.
115. 1 Cor 6.17.

It states that the sheaf should be presented on the day after the first day, which is the third day.[116] For Christ came back to life from the dead on the third day, and returned into heaven, into the true tabernacle, and into the holy of holies.

Yet as the loaf interpreted spiritually also pointed to the calf offered as a burnt offering and to its pleasing aroma, as well as to the goat presented for sins committed in ignorance,[117] so too the sheaf can perhaps be interpreted spiritually, though as the one-year-old lamb, the lamb which was perfect. For Christ is totally perfect and deficient in nothing in his own nature. He is, moreover, completely without fault, for he knew no sin, neither was there any deceit in his mouth.[118]

He is also the wonderful fine flour soaked with oil, that is to say, life in all its abundance and joyousness. For we live rejoicing in him because of the hope laid up for us, and being sprinkled with the grace of the Holy Spirit, we declare in accordance with the words found in the Psalms: "You have anointed my head with oil."[119] For we have been shown mercy through faith in Christ, and we are, after a fashion, offered up like smoke rising from the altar together with him, though in a secondary way, just as what we describe as grains are made into fine flour, and these grains we say are the meal obtained from the growth of the field.[120] For nobody could deny that, although he became one of us in the economy of his Incarnation, Christ is rightly considered as being above us. His life is undoubtedly of incomparably more worth, for it is one that is entirely holy and blameless. But ours are much inferior, like the grains, by which I mean those things made into fine wheat flour. And the fine flour is a figure of his life. Yet the grains are offered up at the altar together with the fine flour. For, as I said, we are offered up like the smoke of the altar with Christ, and also with him we

116. Cf. Lv 23.11, which speaks literally of the "morrow [*epaurion*] of the first day." How Cyril is able to make this the "third" day is unclear, unless he means to say that this fact was particularly true of the passion week.

117. Var. "the goat that purified those who had committed sins in ignorance."

118. Cf. 1 Pt 2.22; 2 Cor 5.21; Is 53.9.

119. Ps 23.5 (22.5 LXX).

120. Lit. "from vegetables."

are all a pleasing aroma and are made acceptable to God the Father. Yet those who do not have Christ are not at all suitable for offering up, for "without me," he says, "you can do nothing."[121] [625]

Now it also says, "You shall not eat until the same day when you present the sheaf." For neither those at the time of the law nor the band of holy prophets had the new food, which is the teachings of Christ, nor did they have the actual renewal of human nature, except perhaps by way of prediction only. So since our Lord Jesus Christ came back to life again, and like a sheaf he presented himself to God the Father as the firstfruits of humanity, we have now also been transformed into a new manner of life. For we conduct our lives according to the gospel, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit. Through him[122] and with him be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the red heifer that was burnt outside the camp

The divine David says in a particular place, "What shall I render to the Lord for all the benefits he has given me?"[123] It is very fitting for us also to say such words. For what do we have that could be of equal value to what God the Father has done? "For he gave us his own Son so that everyone who believes in him should not perish but have eternal life,"[124] and he put aside, in effect, the affection that was properly due to him. For Christ gave himself for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and it is we ourselves who have indeed been saved. He was made weak on account of our sins, suffered pain for our sakes, and endured the death of his flesh. This was not so that he might be seen to remain among the dead with us, but that rising up to life with him and because of him, and returning to a state of incorrup-

121. Jn 15.5.

122. Although the immediately preceding noun is the "Spirit," there is no doubt that "Christ" is here intended by the pronoun.

123. Ps 116.12 (115.3 LXX).

124. Cf. Jn 3.16.

tion, we should joyfully say, "O death, where is your victory? O Hades, where is your sting?"[125]

So what, then, is the path that leads to this destination? It is the grace of baptism, through which we are all cleansed of all our filth and are declared to be partakers of the divine nature[126] through the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us. For it is then that we had our consciences sprinkled clean from dead works, as the blessed Paul writes,[127] and we became partakers of the mystical blessing. Our minds were filled with grace from above, and we became zealous and worthy of admiration. And what blessing of this kind were we not seen to have?

You can see that what I have said is true, if you understand the divine matters disclosed in connection with the heifer. It says, *And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, "This is the constitution of the law which the Lord has commanded, saying, 'Tell the people of Israel that they should bring you a red heifer, one that is without blemish, which has no defect, and upon which no yoke has been put. And you shall give it to Eleazar the priest, and it shall be taken outside the camp to a clean place, and it shall be slain before him. Eleazar shall take some of its blood and sprinkle the blood seven times towards the front of the tabernacle of witness. Then it shall be burned* [628] *in his presence; its skin, its flesh, and its blood, along with its dung, shall be burned. And the priest shall take some cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet material, and throw them into the midst of the fire in which the heifer is burning. Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his body in water. After that the priest shall come into the camp, but he shall be unclean until evening. The man who burned the heifer shall also wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and be unclean until evening. A man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer* (and so it continues). *And this will be a perpetual statute for the people of Israel and for the foreigners residing among you.'"*[128]

To this the Lawgiver adds that to touch anything that had died caused defilement and made people unclean.[129] The per-

125. 1 Cor 15.55; cf. Hos 13.14.
126. Cf. 2 Pt 1.4.
127. Cf. Heb 9.14.
128. Nm 19.1–10.
129. Cf. Nm 19.11–16.

son affected in this way would be unclean for the whole period of seven days. He should be cleansed by being sprinkled with the ashes of the heifer mixed with blood in water on the third day, and then again on the seventh. Unless he did this, it says, his uncleanness would remain unpurified. So he would suffer punishment because he had defiled the tabernacle of the Lord. *"That soul,"* it says, *"shall be cut off from Israel, because the water of sprinkling was not sprinkled upon him."*[130]

Now if it happened that somebody died in a house, it says that the house itself, together with everything in it, namely every vessel, would then fall under the charge of uncleanness. If there were any containers standing without a lid, these were also polluted. And it says that anyone out in the open country who happened to touch the body of someone slain, the bone of a dead person, or a grave, would similarly be defiled.

Why it prescribed that such things should be purified we shall state as we are able, and we shall carefully[131] unravel what is obscure at the literal level by means of appropriate reasoning.

2. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the heifer, as he was completely without defect and totally free of all blemish, not knowing how to commit sin. For he could boldly say, "The ruler of this world is coming, and he will find nothing in me."[132] And also to the Jews he said, "Which of you convicts me of sin? If I speak the truth, why do you not believe me?"[133]

Note, however, that in the sacred writings he is at one time called a calf and at another a heifer. This is so that through the male animal he is signified as being a leader, while through the female, one that is inferior and in subjection. For as the God of all he is supreme and exercises dominion over all with God the Father, yet he willingly submitted to the law and observed the teachings of Moses, and though he was superior to all, he was also a servant. And it is not in the least surprising that he is also

130. Nm 19.13.

131. Lit. "skillfully."

132. Cf. Jn 14.30. Cyril has changed the wording of the last clause, which in the Gospel literally says, "he has nothing in me."

133. Jn 8.46.

called a prophet, one that came in the form of a servant, even though he is the Lord and God of the prophets.

The heifer was red, for the mystery of Christ becoming human was fulfilled in blood, since it is indeed the case that he was obedient to the Father to the point of death, death on the cross, and he achieved the salvation of those upon earth through his own blood. So the redness of the heifer was an especially distinct symbol of blood.

Now although Christ was obedient to the Father, and became a man with us under the law in the economy of his Incarnation, and although [629] he was called a servant, not despising the flesh[134] when he assumed flesh, yet he was and is free, because he is also by nature God, and is not in the least bit bound by a yoke of servitude, nor is he susceptible to such in any way. For he comes from above, and is above all, having come forth from the free being of God the Father. Thus it said that it was necessary for a heifer to be presented that was red and without blemish, and also one that had not been placed under a yoke to labor. For if the Only-Begotten emptied himself and was willing to be sent down in the form of a servant, how could there be any doubt that it was from on high that he lowered himself and that it was of his fullness that he was emptied? And how too could one doubt that it was from his former, innate state of freedom that he came down in the form of a servant? I say, therefore, that the heifer indicates that which is in subjection and under the governance of the law.

The heifer was red because the manner of the divine economy involved Christ shedding his blood on our account and for our sakes. And the heifer was without blemish, for Christ knew no sin. And it was unaccustomed to labor and to the yoke because of the freedom Christ possessed in his deity and because servitude was unknown to him, even though he became one of us and came in the form of a servant.

It says, "*The heifer shall be given to Eleazar the priest, and it shall be taken outside the camp to a clean place, and it shall be slain before him.*" The priest was a figure of those who are holy and sanctified, and who have been anointed with the Holy Spirit, since it

134. Var. "limitation."

is said through the holy man to us who believe: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation."[135] To us holy ones then, who are a chosen race and a holy nation, Christ has been given as our sanctification and redemption, as our wisdom and righteousness from God the Father,[136] as our Savior and Redeemer, the one who, as the divine Paul writes, "suffered outside the gate."[137] He further said that we should go there, bearing his reproach, that is, our own cross. The Savior himself also said the same thing: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me."[138]

Now the law, in prescribing that the heifer should be slaughtered in the sight of the priest, signified that it is most proper and profitable for those who are holy and sanctified to have the Christ, him who died, in the view, as it were, of their eyes. And when we are mindful of the Christ who died on our account and for our sakes, it is then that we are greatly amazed at what the divine Paul declares to us concerning him: "For one died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for him who died for us and was raised again."[139] And again he said, "For I through the law died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life that I live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for us."[140] Therefore, let the sacrificial death that he endured for us be set somehow before the eyes of our hearts. And thus we will no longer live for ourselves, but rather for God, as those who have been purchased by the blood of Christ, who gave himself for us, in accordance with [632] the Scriptures.

It further prescribed that by the hand of the priest the holy tabernacle was to be sprinkled with blood seven times, and that the heifer should be burned to ashes, and no part of the whole

135. 1 Pt 2.9.
136. Cf. 1 Cor 1.30.
137. Heb 13.12.
138. Mt 16.24; cf. Mk 8.34; Lk 9.23.
139. 2 Cor 5.14–15.
140. Gal 2.19–20.

was to be omitted, but it should be burned with its flesh, its dung, its skin, and the remaining parts of the body. For Christ sanctifies the true tabernacle, which is the church, with his own blood, and he sanctifies it copiously and totally. For this, I believe, is what is meant by the tabernacle being sprinkled with blood seven times, the number seven being symbolic of totality.

The burning of the heifer to ashes after its slaughter appears to indicate the acceptance of the death which Christ underwent for us. For silver is approved by being tested in fire, as is recited in the Psalms: "You have tested us, O God; you have tried us as silver is tried in the fire."[141] That Christ was approved through his being obedient to the point of death is very plainly depicted here, it seems to me. For through Zechariah the prophet, who we may suppose is addressing those justified by faith, namely those for whom Christ died, it said, "And I will say to them, 'If it is agreeable to you, weigh out and give me my wages, or refuse to do so.'" Then the prophet said, "So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me, 'Throw it into the furnace and see if it is approved, as I was approved for their sakes.'"[142] Surely then, as I said, the burning of the heifer to ashes after it was slain signifies that Christ was tested to the point of death and was approved.

None of the heifer was cast aside, however, for the whole of Christ is holy, the flesh and the skin, that is to say, the parts that are covered over and hidden, and those that are visible and external. For he was by nature God, although he became one of us, apart from the fact that he knew no sin.

Cedar wood, as well as hyssop and a scarlet thread, were thrown into the embers. The cedar nicely indicates to us incorruptibility, for cedar wood does not undergo decay. The hyssop denotes cleansing, for this plant is a purgative that naturally dissolves impurities in the bowels. The scarlet thread especially well signifies the Word becoming joined to flesh, for the Word was formed of flesh and blood, and on our account he was tried as through fire and to the point of death, as I said just now. Yet his suffering and the mode of his human existence procured

141. Ps 66.10 (65.10 LXX).
142. Zec 11.12–13.

incorruption and purification for us. For in him we have been justified in our souls and inward parts[143] and have rid ourselves of pollution, since baptism truly brings salvation and the imparting of power, not as the removal of filth from the body, but as the appeal to God of a good conscience,[144] and through it there comes the forgiveness of sins, the grace that assuredly follows the confession of faith. So then, that Christ died for us and became the way to incorruption and life, can in no way be doubted.

Now the man who burnt the heifer and mixed the ashes with the cedar wood, the [633] hyssop, and the piece of scarlet, and also the man who gathered up the ashes, were unclean, it says, until evening, even though they washed their clothes and were washed clean themselves. The law was perhaps demonstrating here the weakness of human nature, and that if our actions were to be examined carefully in detail, nobody would be completely above reproach with regard to what had been commanded to be performed, namely the divine and sacred ministry. Even if someone wished to live in a more excellent way and was as pure as was possible, he would still not have a ministry that was without fault. For no one is worthy to take up the mysteries of our Savior. And no wonder, for the sacred word persuades us that "the stars are not pure before him."[145] Surely then, if our actions were compared to the purity of Christ, they would be impure and defiled, and subject to divine punishment. Also, one might reasonably be amazed when the divine singer says, "If you should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? For with you there is forgiveness."[146] Therefore, the person who thinks himself pure is rebuked. For as I said, much better than the condition of human nature is to attain to complete sinlessness and to have purity within us[147] through our association with Christ.

143. Lit. "bowels."

144. Cf. 1 Pt 3.21.

145. Jb 25.5.

146. Ps 130.3–4 (129.3–4 LXX). The Harleian MS omits the last sentence of the citation.

147. Var. "to have a purity exceeding that which is in us."

It says that the water of purification should be poured out outside the camp, and not within the camp itself, since purification in Christ is to be found outside, as it were, the congregation of the Jews. For he utterly abandoned it, saying, "Behold, your house is left to you desolate."[148] So the purifying grace then flowed, so to speak, to the Gentiles, and, as Paul says, "Those who were far off have been brought near."[149] For they were called through faith and have been richly blessed with the righteousness found in Christ, while the people of Israel chose to disbelieve.

The law made it clear that the water of purification could readily wash away every form of impurity when it said that if anyone touched a dead body he would be defiled, but he could be released from what had come upon him only if he were sprinkled with the water of purification on the third and the seventh day. Indeed the deadness, the corruption of bodies, was symbolic of impurity. And the water of sprinkling that was mixed with the ashes of the heifer and other things was a figure of holy baptism.

Accordingly, the person who is caught up in dead works and in defiling acts that lead to corruption (and we say that the dead works of the flesh are godless and profane desires, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, and evil lust) has no other way of being cleansed unless he is purified and washes away the defilement through holy baptism with respect to the third and the seventh day. And the third day signifies the time of the resurrection, the last period of time, that of fulfillment, in which the Only-Begotten became man.

Now it further says that if a house became defiled because someone had died in it, those who entered the house would be unclean. Also, every vessel and container that was not covered over would be in a defiled condition unless these too were cleansed in the same way by the water of purification on the third and on the [636] seventh day. In these matters regarding the house that was defiled, along with the vessels and uncovered containers in it, the Lawgiver seems to be indicating to

148. Mt 23.38.
149. Cf. Eph 2.13.

us the killing of the Lord by the congregation of the Jews. It is this congregation as a whole that is understood spiritually by the house, and the individuals in it are understood by all the vessels, as man is a vessel upon the earth. That the Jews did not have a sound mind, but one that was greatly disposed to defilement and open to all kinds of inclinations to act wickedly, is in some way hinted at by the vessels that were not covered, into which it was easy for anything to drop, whether a gecko or some other creature found in houses. But those who have been justified by faith do not have this kind of mind. For their mind is secure and covered over, and it is not easy for inclinations towards acting wickedly to gain access to it.

It says that even *"if anyone happened to touch the body of someone slain, the bone of a dead person, or a grave, he would be defiled."*[150] And we say that *"someone slain"* is one who has an unhealthy heart, being as though he were slain, either by worldly lusts, or by pleasures of this world and of the flesh. We take *"the bone of a dead person"* to be the remains of impurity, and *"a grave"* as a kind of reminder of the impurity that causes death. For there are times when Satan strikes the heart. And although we are defeated to some degree by carnal passions and we ourselves are weakened, it is not with regard to sin in its total extent. So we continue to live in the world still having the condition in which there are the remnants of sin. It is as if to say that there is someone who is quick to lose his temper or is overcome by the love of money, and he cannot always avoid such excesses.[151] This shows, I believe, that a certain amount of impurity remains, of which the bone of a dead person was a symbol. But even though our passion has now been conquered, when we let our minds lapse into forgetfulness, and we pass near some hidden pleasure, we sometimes commit sin in no small measure.

We have, however, been delivered from such charges, since Christ has washed us clean and purified us through his suffering. For he died for us, and by his wounds we have been healed.[152] He himself took away our sins and is our advocate

150. Nm 19.16.
151. Var. "he cannot avoid the expression of his passions."
152. Cf. Is 53.5; 1 Pt 2.24.

with the Father for our sins, "and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world," as the divine John wrote.[153] Therefore, there is total cleansing, a total justification, sanctification, and redemption in Christ. With him and through him be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.[154] Amen.

Concerning the bronze serpent

1. "God did not create death, nor does he delight in the destruction of living creatures," according to what is written.[155] For he created everything to have being and the generations of the world to be preserved. But as the first person of our race, Adam, was plagued by disobedience and ignored the divine command, he offended God the Maker, and so fell into corruption. Human nature came under a curse, and the race was subject to punishment. And we wretches, even though we were made in incorruption, after we have barely flourished like shadows and like the grass of the field for a short season, we descend ingloriously back to the earth, our mother.

At this the saints have in various ways cried out, lamenting the condition that we are in. Thus one can plainly hear the blessed David as he cries, "Man is like nothingness."[156] Likewise Isaiah said, "All flesh is like grass, and all [637] the glory of man is like the flower of grass."[157] For we have now come, as I said, to this state of wretchedness and degradation, so that even wise men under the inspiration of the Spirit are not able to speak of anything to which our condition could reasonably be compared.

Yet the Maker did not ignore those who were affected in this way, but rather he thought them worthy of his consideration, and rendered them free in Christ from death and corruption.

153. Cf. 1 Jn 2.1–2.

154. Var. omit "for ever and ever."

155. Wis 1.13.

156. Ps 144.4 (143.4 LXX). Before this text the Harleian Codex adds another psalm citation from 49.12 (48.13 LXX): "Man, despite his honor, does not understand."

157. Is 40.6.

How was this so? It is in fact evident to all, even if one cannot perhaps say how. And it is the case that one may also perceive the import[158] of this mystery in the older Scriptures.

Now in Numbers it reads as follows: *Departing from Mount Hor by the way leading to the Red Sea, they went around the land of Edom. Then the people became disheartened on the journey, and they spoke against God and against Moses, saying, "Why have you brought us out of Egypt to kill us in the desert? For there is no food or water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." So the Lord sent deadly snakes among the people, and they bit them, and many of the people of Israel died. Then the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we spoke against the Lord and against you. So pray to the Lord that he take away the snakes from among us." Moses prayed for the people, and the Lord said to him, "Make a serpent and set it up on a pole.*[159] *And if a snake bites a person, everyone that is bitten who looks at it will live." So Moses made a bronze serpent, and set it up on a pole. And it happened that when a serpent bit a person, and he looked at the bronze serpent, then he lived.*[160]

The people had labored in Egypt, and when they were burdened with unbearable servitude, they were redeemed by God, and many wonderful signs were done there. The water was turned into blood, and frogs and gnats, as well as flies and the downpour of hail, almost ruined the land of the Egyptians. But they were further punished with the sending of darkness, and those who chose to oppress others were grievously afflicted with the death of the firstborn when God wonderfully saved the people of Israel. Then, when they were passing through the midst of the sea upon dry land, they saw the Egyptians suffer an abject destruction. They received bread from heaven, for God sent down the manna for them. It is also said that Christ is to be understood as the rock, and that he showed mercy beyond expectation in providing those who were thirsty with flowing water.

For the Deity is all-powerful, and he ungrudgingly bestows the necessities of life upon those who depend on him. Those

158. Or "power," "force."
159. Or "standard."
160. Nm 21.4–9.

who enjoy such excellent gifts, however, are tested with a few arduous trials. Also, because some are forgetful of what things there are that come from God, and have not the least ability to put their faith in him, but are reckless,[161] easily shaken, and prone to timidity of spirit, they are remarkably ignorant of the gifts from God which they have been granted. For the people called the bread from heaven *"worthless,"* and complained about the lack of water, even though they had learned[162] that nothing was impossible for the divine and ineffable Being, and that he had appointed a rock of flint for them as a source of running streams.

So when [640] they made bold accusations against God, they were punished by the bites of the snakes. Then when they came to be mindful of their sins, they shed tears and confessed their offenses. They besought the mediator, Moses, that God should be compassionate and gentle with them. So Moses fell prostrate and made entreaty. Then in obedience to the commands from heaven, he made a bronze serpent, and set it up high. He instructed those who had been stricken to look upon it, and in doing this they were saved.

2. There now follows a careful examination of what the text is about, and wherein the great and wise mystery lies. For it is not the literal sense that satisfies those who are more discerning, but the mysteries that are found in the figures. So we shall now speak of the matter, transforming the narrative once again from the figure to its more general principle and to that which is the real truth.

The fact is that we are displeased with the good gifts that come from God above, and we seek heedlessly after pleasure to a degree that is not profitable. We set aside the exercise of virtue, and incline ourselves rather to what is shameful. In doing this we have grieved our Benefactor, and in more than one way we have given offense to our Maker. Consequently, we have fallen prey to the bites of the snakes, spiritual snakes that is, which strike us by means of every kind of sin, bringing us down into the bonds of death. And that rebellious serpent, Satan, leads

161. Var. "unsound."
162. Var. add "by experience."

a multitude of venomous beasts, as it were, and in the beginning the first man, Adam, perished by his bites. And so evil, as though coming forth from a root, crept up on us also who have been born out of the root. Yet we have been saved in a particular manner, for we have[163] beheld the serpent, which is Christ. So how is it that the God who is good by nature, or rather who is goodness itself, should be a serpent? It is because he became one of us, who are evil by disposition, for he came "in the likeness of sinful flesh,"[164] and "he was counted with the transgressors."[165] And that we are evil—though we were not made so by God, but rather we fell headlong into this state of vileness because of sin's tyrannical dominion over us—Christ himself also makes clear when he says, "If you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him?"[166]

Therefore, Christ, who had the likeness of evil, is a serpent because he became a man. But if one should view him from a spiritual perspective, he would be seen as one who is above corruption, surmounting death, considering its bite as nothing, and giving no thought to the strength of its venom. So we shall look upon Christ, if we understand the mystery regarding him correctly. And we firmly believe that although he is God by nature, he became man, and yet while he came in the likeness of evil, his goodness was not in the least bit diminished. For he became one of us, not so that he might be seen as one who is evil along with us, but that he might make us good, transforming us by the Holy Spirit so that we might attain every form of virtue.

Moreover, the serpent was raised up on a pole, as Christ was lifted up on the precious cross, and he himself declared this to the Jews, saying, "When you lift up the Son of Man then you will know that [641] I am he."[167] We ascertain that the serpent was a figure that looked to the mystery of Christ since he ex-

163. Var. "we ourselves have also."
164. Rom 8.3.
165. Is 53.12; Lk 22.37.
166. Mt 7.11.
167. Jn 8.28.

pressly said to inquirers, "For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up." And the serpent was bronze, because it represented the pleasing and melodious sound of the divine proclamation of the gospel.[168] For there is no one who has not heard the oracles given through Christ, but they have gone into all the world, and the mystery regarding him is spoken about. To him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess[169] that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.[170] Amen.

168. Bronze would appear to have been associated with certain musical instruments, such as cymbals and gongs (cf. 1 Chr 15.19; 1 Cor 13.1).

169. Var. add "to God."

170. Cf. Phil 2.10–11.

BOOK THIRTEEN: DEUTERONOMY

Concerning [644] *the slaughter*[1] *of the heifer in the valley*

AT MANY TIMES and in many ways God spoke long ago to the fathers by the prophets,[2] but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the world."[3] Although the Son is by nature God, he came down and emptied himself, for he became flesh and dwelt among us, according to the Scriptures.[4] Those who truly understand this are enriched through the precious divine grace, "For as many as received him," it says, "he gave them the right to become children of God."[5]

But those who do indeed reject the divine and saving word have lost all hope, for those who are evil perish in an evil manner, since they profanely insult the Savior and Redeemer of all. Such were the wretched Jews over whom the prophet Jeremiah made lamentation, saying, "Who will give water to my head,[6] and a fountain of tears to my eyes, so that I might weep for this people day and night?"[7] For those who are capable of being illustrious and worthy of emulation, how can people devoid of any innate goodness not reasonably be reckoned as being

1. Lit. "hamstringing" (see n. 10 below).
2. Var. "long ago to the prophets."
3. Heb 1.1–2.
4. Jn 1.14.
5. Jn 1.12.
6. The LXX here gives a very literal translation of a Hebrew idiom having the sense of "O that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears."
7. Jer 9.1 (8.23 LXX).

just the same as those who are now dead? For these people the prophet suitably lamented and shed tears out of love and affection. Surely, then, they became desolate of all good, and unruly Israel was shaken off its very foundations. For Christ passed over to the Gentiles, and a small portion of the dull-witted Jews has barely been preserved from that time on. And this, I believe, is what was uttered[8] prophetically through Isaiah [645] when he said, "Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and we would have become the same as Gomorrah."[9]

So come now, if it seems good to do so, and let us examine the import of the mystery from the words of the Mosaic writings. For this is what was written in Deuteronomy: *"If someone is found slain in the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, fallen in the field, and it is not known who struck him down, then your elders and your judges shall go out and measure the distance to the towns around the slain man. And the elders of the town that is nearest to the body shall take a heifer from the herd, which has not labored and which has not pulled with a yoke. The elders of that town shall bring the heifer down to a rough valley, which has not been cultivated nor sown, and they shall slaughter*[10] *the heifer in the valley. Then the priests and the Levites shall come, for the Lord your God has chosen them to stand before him and to pronounce blessings in his name, and by their word every dispute and every assault*[11] *shall be settled. And all the elders of that town who come near to the slain man shall wash their hands over the head of the heifer that was slaughtered in the valley. Then they shall respond and say, 'Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it happen. Be gracious to your people Israel, O Lord, whom you redeemed from the land of Egypt, that innocent blood may not be laid upon your people Israel, and that atonement shall be provided on their behalf for the shed blood.' So you shall remove*

8. Lit. "sung."

9. Is 1.9.

10. Lit. "hamstring," as in the *Glaphyra* on Genesis, Fathers of the Church 137, p. 324 n. 46.

11. The noun *aphê* literally means "touch." The Latin translator in Migne understood this as "leprosy." In this he departed from the Vulgate text, which took the reference to be to the determination of clean and unclean.

the guilt of innocent blood from your midst if you do what is good and pleasing before the Lord your God."[12]

2. Now Emmanuel was slain for us, for "he was bruised for our iniquities," in accordance with the Scriptures.[13] He was seen to undergo this suffering in the land of the Jews, outside the gate of Jerusalem. Yet they did not know who it was that smote him, nor in what manner. So what does the law have to say about this?

We can indeed say that the audacious exploits of the Jews against Christ were an act of profanity on their part. For they brought him to Pilate, and they were to be found crying out, "Away with him, away with him! Crucify him!"[14] and also, "If you do not kill this man, you are not a friend of Caesar."[15] The divine disciples openly spoke out against the evil intentions[16] of these people to God the Father in heaven, saying, "For truly both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus Christ, whom you anointed."[17] And the blessed Peter most clearly and distinctly rebuked the Jewish people, saying on one occasion, "You killed the Author of life,"[18] and on another, "You disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be given to you."[19]

Why, then, does the law say that they did not know who it was that struck the person? The meaning of the words is mystical and is not accessible to all in a simple manner, but it is readily intelligible only to those who truly understand the mystery of Christ. For the leaders of the Jews, [648] and those who joined in their ungodly scheming, supposed that they were in control, attributing the matter to their own evil designs, with Christ as an unwilling victim. They rejoiced as if they had in fact prevailed, not realizing that he suffered willingly and gave himself

12. Dt 21.1–9.
13. Is 53.5.
14. Jn 19.15.
15. Cf. Jn 19.12.
16. Var. "the unbelief."
17. Acts 4.27.
18. Acts 3.15.
19. Acts 3.14.

for us in obedience to the commands of the Father. Thus to Pilate he plainly said, "You would have no authority over me unless it had been given you from above."[20]

Therefore, it is the Father that gave the Son and, if we may say so, he himself is said to have slain Emmanuel. And so in the book of Psalms the person of Christ is presented as speaking about the wickedness of the Jews to God the Father in heaven, saying, "They have persecuted the one you yourself have struck down, and they have added to the pain of my wounds."[21] So their act of murdering the Lord should not be thought of too greatly, for they did not exercise power of themselves, as though Christ were helpless, but let them learn the truth of the matter spoken through Moses, for they did not know the one who had struck him.

We see, then, that the one slain in the land of the Jews was Emmanuel. But the mystery concerning him certainly did not find its fulfillment among the Jews, but was rather administered in the region and land of the Gentiles. For it says that when the person who had been slain was found, they should take a heifer that had no experience of the yoke or of labor. And taking it down into a rough and uncultivated[22] valley, it should be slaughtered[23] by those appointed for ministry. Then, having washed their hands over the heifer, they[24] said, *"Our hands did not shed this blood."*

The heifer, then, is a figure of Christ, as we said before. He is a heifer in that while he had no experience of the yoke, as a man he was under the yoke, but at the same time was free from the yoke on account of his being by nature God. For the Deity is free and is under the yoke of nothing that exists. Rather, he rules over all and holds the entire creation in his hands. So although the Son was free, being by nature God, he became a man alongside us and was under the yoke, since we ourselves have been placed under the yoke of the authority of the God-

20. Jn 19.11.
21. Ps 69.27 (68.27 LXX).
22. Var. omit "and uncultivated."
23. Lit. "hamstrung."
24. That is, the elders of the nearest town (Dt 21.6–7).

head. This is why he called God "Father" as we do. So then, he is a heifer insofar as he is under the yoke with respect to his human nature, yet he is free from the yoke because of his divine glory and absolute freedom.

Now note that the heifer was brought to a rough and uncultivated valley. For after that precious crucifixion, when Christ was seen to be slain, he left the land of the Jews, and removed himself from then on to the region of the Gentiles, which was neither worked nor sown. For before Christ shone forth upon the nations, he was in a world that was like a dry and uncultivated land, devoid of fruitfulness with respect to God. And so the prophet Isaiah says about this land, "Rejoice, O desert, with its villages. Let the wilderness be glad, and may it blossom forth like the lily."[25] So then, the countries of the Gentiles, the whole multitude of them, are well compared to a rough land that has not been worked upon and is completely without fruit.

In the valley the heifer had to be slaughtered by the sacred ministers. For, as I said, the work of the mystery of Christ is carried out by us for the people [649] of the Gentiles. As we declare his suffering and his return to life from the dead, so we admit them into the blessed mysteries. This, I believe, is the significance of the slaying[26] of the heifer. For in proclaiming his death and his resurrection, as I said, we are performing[27] that noble mystery.

Some of the Jews, however, may forsake their ungodliness and leave that distant city in which Christ was slain and was seen to have suffered; and coming to the rough and uncultivated valley, there they will wash their hands over Christ himself. For those who are baptized into his death are washed. This, I believe, is the significance of *"They shall wash their hands over it."* Confessing that they were complicit in the wickedness of the Jews, they will obtain forgiveness. For when the Jews raged against Christ, they inscribed the condemnation for their impiety upon their own heads, saying, "His blood be upon us and upon our children."[28] But these others were desirous to receive

25. Cf. Is 35.1; 42.11.
26. Lit. "hamstringing."
27. Or "fulfilling."
28. Mt 27.25.

grace from him, and sought to be cleansed through the Holy Spirit. And so by means of matters that they had learned to revere, it is as if they had cried out, *"Our hands did not shed this blood."*

There is therefore cleansing in Christ, even for any of the Jews who cared to come to their right minds, something which the divinely inspired disciples, as well as those who came to believe through them, did before all others. Here in the law it is the role of the body of elders that is very appropriately assumed by the disciples, for they were men who were especially chosen and honorable, making entreaty for the wickedness of Israel through faith in Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the captive woman whose hair was shorn and whose nails were cut

1. The God of all delivered the people of the race of Israel out of a house of bondage, as though out of an iron furnace, having made war, in effect, against the Egyptians with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, as it is written,[29] arraying his miracles against the raging of those oppressing them. For he performed signs and wonders, and commanded the people to go through the midst of the sea as though on dry land. Also, as the divine David said, "He sustained them in the wilderness, and he gave them bread from heaven; men ate the bread of angels. He opened up springs of water."[30] For what great wonders did he not do that far exceeded all expectation? Therefore, the divine Moses wrote, "As an eagle would watch over its brood, he took them, and carried them on his back."[31]

Yet the people descended into such evil intent, such depraved reasonings, and such wild undertakings, that they even rejected[32] the Redeemer himself when he was present in the

29. Cf. Ex 13.3; 14.25; 18.9; Dt 4.20; Ps 136.12 (135.12 LXX), etc.
30. Cf. Ps 78.24–25 (77.24–25 LXX); 114.8 (113.8 LXX).
31. Dt 32.11 (abbreviated).
32. Var. "dishonored."

flesh. And why do I speak of this but omit other atrocities? It is because they killed him with a fierce and unrestrained audacity, being driven to commit the most extreme wickedness. Because of this the Jerusalem that murdered the Lord was justly sent away, so showing it to be void of a relationship with God. It was removed to a state in which it suffered every manner of calamity, receiving the self-induced punishment upon its own head, as it were. Emmanuel [652] himself also declared, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often have I desired to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Behold, your house is left to you desolate."[33]

That the synagogue of the Jews, which acted hatefully towards Christ, would undergo a terrible and unbearable punishment even the law itself represents to us by means of a figure. For it reads as follows: *"If you go out to war against your enemies, and the Lord your God delivers them into your hands, and you take their spoil, and you see among the captives a young woman who is beautiful in appearance, and you desire her and take her as your wife and bring her into your house, then you shall shave her head and cut her nails; and you shall remove the garments of her captivity from upon her, and she shall remain in your house, and she shall mourn for her father and mother for a month. After that you may go into her and live with her, and she shall be your wife. And if you are not pleased with her, then you shall set her free, but she shall not be sold for money; you shall not treat her contemptuously, because you have humbled her."*[34]

I do not think there is any point in analyzing the literal sense of the text, nor in exercising our skill in an examination of those matters whose nature it is to serve as shadows. For there is nothing difficult in the literal sense. The text is very straightforward, and with some effort one can attain an understanding of what is prescribed here. Therefore, our inquiry shall be made into spiritual meanings.

2. Now what is this war that took place, and how is it to be interpreted? Who is the woman that has a beautiful appearance and such comeliness? And what does it mean to cut all the

33. Mt 23.37–38.
34. Dt 21.10–14.

hair off her head, to remove her nails, and the garments of captivity?

So, as I have mentioned before, the synagogue of the Jews labored as captives for the Egyptians. The fathers went down to Egypt in the first place when a famine came upon the land. But after a long time had passed, they became strong and courageous, and increased in number. The Egyptians were afraid that, being emboldened by their numbers, the people of Israel should fight against them, and so they would fall under the power of those they had previously overcome. Thereupon, Israel was afflicted in no small measure with the task of making bricks.

God, however, was merciful. For, as I said, he fought against the people[35] of the Egyptians, who were intolerably oppressive; he was victorious and brought them to naught. Among the spoils taken in the battle[36] he saw Jerusalem, namely the multitude of the Jews, which was radiant with the beauty of her patriarchal nobility, for she was beautiful and most attractive on account of the fathers. When he saw her, he desired her, that is to say, he deemed her worthy of his love. Wishing to live together with her, as it were, and to make her a mother of good deeds, he brought her into his own house. And what does this mean? He set up the holy tabernacle in the desert so that, being instructed by the sacrifices offered according to the law, and by the divine ministrations carried out by way of types, she might soon come to know the mystery of Christ. [653] For the law was a tutor with regard to Christ, as the blessed Paul said.[37] So bringing her to his house, he shaved off her hair, removed her nails and the clothes of captivity.

Now as for the head, sacred Scripture has the custom of interpreting it as the mind, and it likens the hair upon it to thoughts of the mind. So the shaving of the hair indicates especially well the removal of certain ideas, something that ancient

35. Following the reading of the Harleian Codex (*dêmois*), instead of "bonds" (*desmois*).

36. The word here (*dorulêpton*) is a unique coinage on the part of Cyril. Its etymology suggests someone or something "taken by the spear."

37. Gal 3.24.

Israel was commanded to perform when they were redeemed, as God clearly said through the all-wise Moses, "You shall have no other gods besides me,"[38] and also, "You shall not behave thus toward the Lord your God. For the abominations that the Lord hates they have performed for their gods."[39] For when they were living in Egypt, they had thoughts of a different kind, supposing there to be an innumerable number of gods. They held the creation in reverence above the Creator,[40] ascribing glory to objects of wood and stone. But when through Moses they were called to a knowledge of him who was by nature the only true God, how can it be doubted that at that time they were introduced to other thoughts that were utterly new to them? The divine Paul commanded that we too should take pains to do the same, saying, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God."[41] The shaving of the head, then, surely represents this fact.

The removal of long nails speaks figuratively of the putting off of filth and uncleanness, for I do not know how those who like to have nails much longer than necessary can keep them free of dirt. It cannot be doubted that it was necessary for Israel, in being made worthy of a relationship with God, to depart from its former uncleanness,[42] as the law clearly declares: "You shall not murder"; "You shall not commit adultery"; "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor";[43] and the other commandments alongside these.

As for the garments of captivity, I would say they represent servitude, and also depict figuratively a base way of life. For being subject to the desires of the devil and submitting her neck to his oppression, Israel accepted that torn and filthy garment, which is the love of the flesh. Then when she was redeemed and placed under the law, she was instructed how to think and

38. Ex 20.3; Dt 5.7.

39. Dt 12.31.

40. Var. "the one who created it."

41. Rom 12.2.

42. The words "from its former uncleanness" have been added from the Harleian Codex.

43. Ex 20.13–14, 16; Dt 5.17–18, 20.

do better things, and she removed from herself the former baseness with which she was charged, and lived under the instruction given through the law as though she had put on a splendid robe. And this, I believe, is what the divine Paul also urges us ourselves to do when he says, "You have put off the old man with its practices, and have put on the new, which is being renewed in the image of him who created it."[44] In holy baptism we strip off, as it were, the garments of captivity and throw them to Satan. And then, putting on Emmanuel, we give thanks to God the Father,[45] saying, "May my soul rejoice in the Lord, for he has clothed me with the garment of salvation, and the robe of rejoicing."[46] Paul [656], being one who gave commandments,[47] also said, "Clothe yourselves with our Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its lusts."[48] Note how, having put off the things of the flesh, like the garments of captivity, we are provided with a radiant and divine robe, which is Christ. For it is he who is "the robe of rejoicing" and "the garment of salvation."

So having had her hair cut off, and her long and dirty nails removed, and the garments of captivity taken away, it says that only then could the woman live in the house and reside there as a married woman. Yet she should mourn her father and mother for a month; that is, she should have remembrance of her own family. And after that the man could go into her, and she would be his wife.

I think it necessary that those who have been called into a relationship with God, I mean those set free from wicked thoughts, from vain reasonings that lead to sin,[49] and from all pollution of mind, that is, "the old man[50] which is corrupted by its deceitful[51] lusts," as the divine Paul writes,[52] should un-

44. Col 3.10.
45. Var. omit "to God the Father."
46. Is 61.10.
47. Lit. "being a lawgiver."
48. Rom 13.14.
49. Var. "which lead one to go astray."
50. Var. "Put off the old man."
51. Var. "fleshly."
52. Eph 4.22.

dividedly attend upon[53] the one who has preserved[54] them, the God who has received them into a familial[55] relationship. For to stay in the house, it seems to me, indicates the act of attending upon without distraction. And so the blessed David, knowing that which is most excellent and profitable, says, "One thing I asked from the Lord, this I will seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to look upon his holy temple."[56] It would be an especially clear indication that one's mind is fixed upon God and filled with love for him, if one thought that he should continually tarry in the divine courts in such a way as this. The Maker, however, is not ignorant of the extent of man's thoughts. How could it be so? For he is in fact the one who says, "He knows our frame."[57] Now when we remove ourselves from life in the world and set aside the mind given over to carnal passions, it will not be our practice to do all this without resisting. At first we act weakly, and our mind is still drawn to base things through various pleasures. It easily slips into a remembrance of the distractions that are in the world, and very much welcomes,[58] as it were, a relationship with it, even though the law might perhaps restrain it, and God may draw us back to a more excellent life, leading us into one that is incomparably better. For as virtue is an uphill journey, while the path that takes us to what is depraved is very flat, so we refuse that which requires much effort and readily go along the other.

What does the law then state? *"She shall mourn for her father and mother for a month"*; that is, she should not immediately be received into the man's home to live there, but should spend a short time in remembrance of her own family. It happens to those who are taken captive that even though they might perhaps be treated respectfully by their masters, and even though they may be allowed to live in abundant luxury, yet they still

53. Or "serve."
54. Var. "honored."
55. Var. "spiritual."
56. Ps 27.4 (26.4 LXX).
57. Ps 103.14 (102.14).
58. Var. add "gladly."

long for their town, their home, and their family [657], and they can do nothing other than hold them in remembrance. At times they shed tears, and their mind is filled with sorrow and distress, because they have been separated from their own home.

Such a circumstance was experienced by the congregation of Israel. For they were redeemed out of Egypt and brought out from bitter slavery, and they were called by God to an abundant freedom as was enjoyed by their forefathers. But they also remembered life in Egypt, and they cried out, saying, "Would that we had been struck down by the Lord and died in the land of Egypt."[59] They also berated Moses, saying, "Why did you bring us out into this desert?"[60] So while it was necessary that they be delivered from the accursed love of the flesh and from life in the world, it was at first hard to tear themselves away from such, and they sometimes sought after worldly things. This is what is implied when the Lawgiver says, *"She shall mourn for her father and mother for a month."*

For sure we are not saying that they were ordered to mourn, but rather that they were given the opportunity to do so, and this expression of their weakness was tolerated. And it said that the offenses of those who had gone through this experience should be permitted,[61] because they had not yet acquired endurance. And so God allowed for the passion expressed by the congregation of the Jews in the desert, and he did not completely destroy those who had sinned, though he was rightfully indignant. But that he would not always make allowances for our infirmity and permit us to have remembrance of our previous relationship, namely that with the world, he plainly showed when he assigned a time to mourn that was not lengthy, this being a month, that is, a short and limited period of time. Such an understanding is presented to us by the divine singer, when he said to the church of the Gentiles, "Hear, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your own people and your father's house, because the king has desired your beauty."[62]

59. Ex 16.3.
60. Nm 21.5; cf. Ex 14.11.
61. Or "forgiven."
62. Ps 45.11 (44.12 LXX).

Once she has mourned her father and mother for a month, it says that she shall be the man's wife. For, being freed, as I said, from the life of the world, it is then that we are joined to God, in a spiritual union that is. For "whoever joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with him."[63]

Yet it says, *"If you are not pleased with her, then you shall set her free, but she shall not be sold for money."* For when the synagogue of the Jews acted profanely, and laid hands upon Christ himself, because she behaved badly towards her Master, she became unloved and unwanted, and was sent away from the divine and sacred home, as it were. She was not, however, delivered into slavery, nor was it as though she had been sold to Satan and wholly made subject to his desires. For even though Israel had fallen away from her relationship with Christ, yet she did not worship idols. But she continued to confess and worship him who is by nature the one God, and maintained her love of Moses and the law, for the God of all did not despise her, because she had once been considered worthy of a relationship with him. He teaches us this when he says, *"You shall not treat her contemptuously, because you have humbled her."* Here the humbling means the deflowering of the woman, which points to a union of a spiritual nature, namely that which is in Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning war against the enemies

"Take up your weapons and shields," proclaimed [660] Isaiah the prophet.[64] The most-wise Paul also said, "Put on the whole armor of God."[65] For those who are friends of God and lovers of virtue, and who are nurtured together on all that is excellent, it is very much their habit to make war against every profane and carnal pleasure. Being firm in their faith, immovable in their endurance, patient in labor, and eager to perform the most admirable deeds, they assault the evil dispositions of

63. 1 Cor 6.17.
64. Jer 46.3 (26.3 LXX). Cyril incorrectly attributes this text to Isaiah.
65. Eph 6.11.

the devil. I do believe, however, that in this engagement nobody may attain to the full measure of spiritual strength, so as to obtain the most wonderful and all-transcending glory, unless he has Christ protecting him.[66] And he is most willing to stand together with and to fight alongside those who are attentive to his will, those who have been richly blessed by the cleansing that comes through him, and that consider the reproach he bore to be a matter of glory. And so the divine psalmist said, "He who dwells in the help of the Most High will abide under the shelter of the God of heaven. He will say to the Lord, 'You are my helper, and my refuge, my God, and my aid; I will hope in him. For he will deliver me from the hunter's snare and from all trouble.'"[67] Since God preserves us, it is sure that we will get the better of our enemies, as the faithful one himself says, "Because he came to me,[68] I will deliver him. He cried out to me, and I will hearken to him. I am with him in affliction; I will deliver him and honor him."[69]

Now note the matter that was recorded by the all-wise Moses. For he said, *"If you go out to make war against your enemies, then you shall keep yourself from every evil thing. If there is a man among you who becomes unclean by reason of a nocturnal emission, then he shall go outside the camp and shall not enter into it. When evening approaches, he shall wash his body in water; and when the sun has set, he may enter the camp. You shall have a place outside the camp where you shall go, and you shall have a tool upon your belt, and when you squat down outside, you shall dig a hole with it and cover over your waste with it. For the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp to protect you and to deliver your enemy into your hands. So your camp shall be holy, and no shameful thing shall be seen in it, or he will turn away from you."*[70]

You should understand that those who wish to have victory over their enemies and to be honored must be rid of all defile-

66. Lit. "as his shield-bearer."
67. Ps 91.1–3 (90.1–3 LXX); cf. Ps 18.2 (17.3 LXX).
68. Var. "hoped in me" (as LXX).
69. Ps 91.14–15 (90.14–15 LXX).
70. Dt 23.9–14 (23.10–15 LXX).

ment. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood,[71] but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places,"[72] which closely watch the lives of men and examine each person's way of life. For our behavior must be rendered blameless and above reproach, so that it might not fall under the accusations of those powers. Also, the father of sin is both an enemy and an avenger.

So, when those [661] who are in this world raise themselves up against their enemies in the practice of warfare, they may perhaps receive blows against their bodies, or they may inflict them upon others. But it is not so with us. For our weapons are not of the flesh, as it is written.[73] Nor are we struck in the flesh, but we receive the attack of lusts upon the mind and heart, and suffer the passions of the love of the flesh. It is necessary, then, for us to be equipped with full spiritual armor, to be protected on all sides by heavenly grace, and as far as is possible to put our minds beyond the effects of every spiritual missile. In this way we shall have the advantage over our opponents, and, being superior to all passion, we shall preserve unscathed the beauty of our souls for God.

Now this is what the law says: *"If you go out to make war against your enemies, then you shall keep yourself from every evil thing,"* that is, distance yourself from all guilt; let there be no word spoken truly against you with regard to any shameful or blameworthy matter; keep yourself from condemnatory accusations, and let every evil word uttered against you be groundless. And that we must avoid charges of fleshly impurity is shown to us in figures by the command that the one who was defiled on account of his emission should go outside the camp and that he should be washed in water as evening approached, and so, if he wished, he might live back in his home once again, and in the camp.

What this matter is about, and what the interpretation of these things is, I will endeavor to explain.

Now if any human defilement occurs, when the mind has

71. Var. add "as it is written."
72. Eph 6.12.
73. 2 Cor 10.4.

for a moment been compelled to allow itself to be invaded by vile lusts, then in this regard it must be excluded from the multitude of the saints, which the Lord has deemed just, since he does not permit the pure to live alongside the impure. For in no way does he allow the corrupting sin within us to escape reproof. Yet we may obtain cleansing in Christ, and be purified by water, speaking with reference to the words: "Wash yourselves, be clean."[74]

In doing this as evening drew near, that is, in the latter times of the world, one may see that this is fulfilled with respect to the congregation of the saints.[75] For those who were defiled by an extraordinary love of the flesh, who once remained outside the camp and congregation of the saints, who were far from the sacred assembly, when they were richly blessed through the cleansing[76] of holy baptism, then those who were far came near, and they were made companions of the saints,[77] and also fellow-citizens and partakers of the same hope. This happened at the time of the advent of Christ, which was as though it were in the evening, as it came towards the close of the present age. It must be said, then, that those who procure[78] the cleansing found in Christ rid themselves of all charges of loving the flesh.

It says, *"You shall have a place outside the camp where you shall go, and you shall have a tool upon your belt, and when you squat down outside, you shall dig a hole with it and cover over your waste with it. For the Lord your God walks in the midst of your camp to* [664] *protect you and to deliver your enemy into your hands. So your camp shall be holy, and no shameful thing shall be seen in it."*

Now it is especially proper that those who wish to contend manfully against their spiritual enemies should shun every kind of impurity, as I said. For "we all stumble in many respects,"[79] and while the unstable nature of man suffers from an inclination to sin, yet "no one can understand his transgressions,"

74. Is 1.16.

75. Var. "of the Gentiles."

76. Var. "the grace."

77. Var. omit "they were made companions of the saints." Harleian only reads: "they are fellow-citizens and . . ."

78. Var. "choose."

79. Jas 3.2.

in accordance with what the psalmist says.[80] So, it says, if we should be overcome by one of the inherent impurities that are within us, and be found infected with any of those things that transgress the law and are contrary to a life of sanctity (since the law of sin dwells in the members of the flesh), then at first the failings originating in our infected condition should not be set forth openly or made visible to many, but, like the person who is put outside and remains unseen far from the camp, they should be concealed by undergoing correction. For "the wise will hide their shame," as it is written.[81]

Then when we cease from our transgressions, and reconstitute our mind, as it were, through influences that lead to better things, so that we choose what is profitable for us, then we remove from within us the unseemliness of those former failings. And so, having overcome the malodorous sin by the subsequent pleasing aroma, we may again enter into the camp of the saints, that is, into the church of the firstborn.

And this too finds its fulfillment in Christ. In what way? By taking up our own cross, in adherence to his words, and being endowed with a mind that is lively and ready for action. For in having an implement upon the belt, that is, something made of wood, this is perhaps indirectly indicating to us the cross. The law is spiritual, and physical things are wont to serve as representations of the spiritual. For we are not in a state of uncleanness in the sight of God who has made things this way, but when we go to the latrine we rid ourselves of all waste from the stomach. But, as I just said, those things that can be perceived by the senses are also types and images of the spiritual. So it is necessary for us to empty ourselves of spiritual uncleanness, *"for the Lord God walks in the midst of the camp."*

Christ likewise dwells and walks among us, and if he sees any shameful or unseemly thing within us, he immediately reacts against it. For the Holy Spirit of wisdom will flee from deceit-

80. Cf. Ps 19.12 (18.13 LXX).

81. Cf. Prv 10.14. Cyril has misquoted. Rather than "shame" the LXX reads *aisthêsis,* meaning the perception of the mind or senses. The confusion no doubt arose from the fact that the word here translated "shame" (*aischunas*) begins with the same three letters.

fulness, as it is written,[82] and he will depart from foolish reasonings. But if he finds us thoroughly cleansed and pure, above all passions and defilements, he will most readily dwell within us and deliver us from the hands of our enemies. It therefore says, "Be holy, because I am holy";[83] and again, "Come out from there, and do not touch anything unclean, and I will receive you, says the Lord."[84] For those who have been completely purified our Lord Jesus Christ joyfully receives, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the stones that were plastered

1. The all-wise and divine Paul says that the people of old were instructed through the writings of Moses with regard to the mystery of Christ. This is indeed the case, and what he said is true. For if we transform the things revealed through Moses into reality, we shall discover within them the most beautiful matters for spiritual contemplation.

Now [665] if we have firmly grasped the literal sense, and also attend to the things expressed in figures, we would be heeding the prophet when he said, "Dig very deep for a dwelling place."[85] For in the shadows themselves we will find nothing that is truly fruitful and profitable, though we declare the commandments to be wholly without fault.[86] This is why the divine Moses placed a veil over his face, signifying, I believe, to those who are more perceptive, that the law is twofold. The true meaning is the inner one, whereas the shadow is presented as a manner of mask, and the things that are visible are a dispensable covering over the matters that are hidden.

So in Deuteronomy Moses teaches us that the instructors in the mysteries of the new covenant in Christ would at times

82. There seems to be no clear reference that Cyril has in mind, but 1 Pt 2.1 is a possibility.

83. Lv 19.2; 1 Pt 1.16.

84. Cf. Is 52.11; Ezek 20.34 LXX; 2 Cor 6.17.

85. Jer 49.30 (30.25 LXX).

86. Var. "but we declare the commandments to be totally unprofitable."

speak the word through himself, yet they would also give instruction respecting the real meaning and offer an exposition that opens up the literal sense by interpreting it more spiritually. This is what is written: *Moses and the elders of Israel gave command, saying, "Keep all these commandments that I command you this day. On the day when you cross over the Jordan into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall set up for yourself large stones, and you shall coat them with plaster, and you shall write upon the stones all the words of this law once you cross over the Jordan, when you enter the land that the Lord the God of your fathers is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord the God of your fathers told you. And when you cross over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones about which I command you this day on Mount Ebal, and you shall coat them with plaster. And there you shall build an altar to the Lord your God, an altar made of stones. You shall not use an iron tool on them. You shall build the altar to the Lord your God from whole stones. Then you shall offer up on it burnt offerings to the Lord your God. And you shall sacrifice a peace offering, and you shall eat and be filled, and rejoice before the Lord your God. And you shall write*[87] *upon these stones all this law."*[88]

Note how he commanded that the words spoken by him with regard to things that would happen later were not to be treated casually, but were to be considered worthy of the most careful attention. These were the matters that were to be taught by the holy apostles.

I will now try to explain clearly each part of this as I am able.

2. It says that when they[89] had passed over the Jordan and marched into the much-desired promised land, having then set up large stones on a high place, they were to cover them with plaster and inscribe upon them all the law very clearly.

The great stones placed on high indicate to us the band of holy apostles, who are great, high, and conspicuous with regard to the truth. When it comes to virtue and the living of a glorious life in Christ, there are none equal to them; because of those things that are prominent among us, we find them to

87. Var. add "very clearly."
88. Dt 27.1–8.
89. Lit. "we."

come high above them all. For tell me: who has a mind that can match those holy and illustrious men, whom [668] Christ also called his own friends? For he said, "I no longer call you servants; you are my friends."[90] He also called them "the light of the world," and "the salt of the earth."[91] He decreed that they should be seen to be honored with the same honor that was fitting for him. He appointed them to be doers of good, and set them forth as physicians for the whole world, saying, "Heal the sick, cast out demons, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead. Freely you have received; freely give."[92] So the stones were large and set up on a mountain, for the conspicuousness of their glory and the prominence of their splendor make these men seem as though they have been placed on high, as on a mountain.

But who were those that set up the stones? Those who crossed the Jordan. Those who have come to believe in the holy Christ, and who have received an abundance of grace through holy baptism. These do indeed set up over themselves teachers and instructors in the mysteries, namely the disciples of our Savior, who are truly the holy and elect stones, concerning whom the prophetic oracle said to us, "Holy stones are rolled upon the ground."[93] For the divine disciples were, in a way, rolled forth to all those under heaven. They traversed the whole world, demonstrating to people everywhere the beauty of the godliness with which they were endowed, proclaiming the true pearl, the one most precious stone, which is Christ.

Then the stones that were coated with plaster were written upon, this being the writing of the law in a very clear manner. For in the holy apostles we find spiritual contemplations of matters in the law most clearly and visibly expressed, no longer foreshadowed in the letter, nor covered by the shadow that obscured, but clear and bright. For the instruction given by these saints is spiritual. And so they speak about the law in a way that makes it manifest. And this, I believe, is the significance of writing it clearly upon the plastered stones, as it is written.

90. Cf. Jn 15.14–15.
91. Mt 5.13–14.
92. Mt 10.8.
93. Zec 9.16 LXX.

So when the stones were set up, the law was put upon them. It said it was necessary to build the altar from other stones that were whole, that is, uncut and not inflicted with blows from an iron implement. And what was the reason for this? It is because Christ is the precious cornerstone, and he has been placed in the foundations of Zion.[94] For it is by him that we are held up, and we have him as a kind of secure base that cannot be shaken. And we ourselves are being built up as living stones into a spiritual house, a holy temple, into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.[95]

Yet we also are no less like an altar. We have been assembled together in a spiritual unity, emitting the pleasing aroma of faith in Christ, offering up through him to God the Father the glory of our virtues as a manner of sweet-smelling incense. And so the divine Paul writes to us, "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service."[96]

So we ourselves are also stones, yet ones that are whole and that have not been struck. For, as I said, those who emit the aroma of Christ render the complete devotion of their minds, not being diverted by [669] the things of the world, and no longer taking thought for the blows of profane and loathsome sins. But as Christ is not divided, so too are they single-minded and true, devoted to God alone, refusing to be divided between him and the things of the world and the flesh. Having devoted himself in this way to God, the holy Paul wrote, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."[97] So it is necessary to remember how God has revealed the same law to us as though on other stones, as he said, "If you make me an altar out of stones, you shall not build it with hewn stones, for if you use your tool on it, the stones are defiled."[98] The stones are therefore whole and unstruck in the way that we were just told.

It says, *"You shall eat and be filled there, and rejoice before the Lord*

94. Cf. Is 28.16; 1 Pt 2.16.
95. Cf. Eph 2.21–22.
96. Rom 12.1.
97. Phil 1.21.
98. Ex 20.25.

your God." For to those who have now come to such glory, so as to be able to emit the aroma of Christ, to these it very appropriately further adds that they are to be filled with sacred and divine nourishment, and also to rejoice spiritually in the presence of God. This is fulfilled when in the churches mystical blessings are granted to those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, now and always, and for ever and ever. Amen.

Concerning the election of Joshua

1. Having a right understanding of both the mystery of Christ and the nature of the Mosaic ministration, the wise John declared, "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."[99] The law was set to bring wrath, and for those who committed a transgression, it imposed a grievous punishment that was both instant and undiscriminating. In general, it denounced base conduct and brought about the condemnation of sin. "For sin," it says, "is not reckoned when there is no law,"[100] and also, "I would not have known sin except through the law."[101] But Christ forgives us our transgressions. For he justifies and sanctifies believers by grace, and he brings to fulfillment the promises made long ago to the fathers. Yet that both of these facts are true Paul made clear when he wrote, "The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."[102] For he calls the shadow contained in the law "letter"; and the ministration in spirit and truth, the gospel ministration that Christ established for people throughout the whole world, he calls "Spirit." Since the first was not faultless, it was therefore necessary later that place be found for a second. God made one obsolete, and promised a new one. So when Moses was removed, and taken out of the way, Christ sprang up, so to speak, and was declared to be leader over us, through whom and in whom we have been

99. Jn 1.17.
100. Rom 5.13.
101. Rom 7.7.
102. 2 Cor 3.6.

brought into the kingdom of heaven and shall receive the happy estate that lasts for unending ages, as we live a life that is pure and holy and free from all guilt.

Besides this, God has instructed us to be well disposed towards and mindful of those things [672] revealed through Moses long ago. For this is what was written: *Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be courageous and strong, for you will enter at the head of this people into the land that the Lord swore to give to our fathers, and you shall give it to them as their inheritance. And the Lord who goes with you will not leave you nor forsake you. Do not fear or be afraid."*[103]

When the most excellent Moses was about to take his leave of human affairs and to be translated into the heavenly dwellings, the divine Joshua was appointed in his place and succeeded him as leader. For, as I said earlier, when the former old ministration of the letter and of the law came to an end, and was, in effect, taken out of the way, the Only-Begotten came down to us from heaven, and became one of us in nature. Although as God he has dominion over all, and in this respect possesses the highest and most resplendent honor, it is necessary that, on account of his likeness to us, he is seen to be called to rule over a kingdom. Therefore, he said, "I have been made king by him," meaning by God the Father, "upon Zion his holy mountain, declaring the decree of the Lord."[104]

So then, as Moses has given way to the glory of Christ, no one should bring him into the midst again; the types should not exercise authority, nor should the shadow be brought to the fore. "The old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."[105] But if anyone should wish to do this, he ought to know that he is dishonoring the divine economy, and looks to be doing violence to God, since he is making void the great and noble mystery. For he who still adheres to the types after Jesus has been manifested will be removed far from those enrolled as saints, and will also lose his portion of the gifts freely given through Christ and have no share in them whatsoever.

103. Dt 31.7–8.
104. Ps 2.6–7.
105. 2 Cor 5.17.

See that the divine Paul expressly reproves certain people in Galatia who were so disposed, when he writes, "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law, or by faith in what you heard? Are you so foolish that having begun with the Spirit, you are now ending[106] with the flesh?"[107] To these words he then adds: "You have become estranged from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. For through faith we await the hope of righteousness."

Now the great Moses was indeed a faithful man and one of the most eminent. Yet he was a servant, and this was the limit of his status, being a mediator and minister of the law that condemned. But he who was the Lord of Moses[108] came and brought us the grace that justifies. So now, let the law keep silent, that which was the accuser of sin and the ministry of condemnation, through which God bound all over to sin, so that he might have mercy upon all, as it is written.[109]

2. What was it that the great Moses said to Joshua? *"Be courageous and strong, for you will enter at the head of this people into the land that the Lord swore to give to our fathers, and you shall give it to them as their inheritance."*

Now observe the foresight of the law. [673] Moses was not ignorant of the glory of the Savior, his incomparable excellence in respect of all that is holy, or rather in respect of every rational creature. He knew of his irresistible power, his almighty and unconquerable authority, and so, in effect, he also looked with wonder upon the enemy falling, death losing its energy, Satan fleeing, and the ancient and invincible serpent rendered fearful and beaten, the sinful mouth stopped up, lepers cleansed, demons trembling, and the raging sea made calm with a single word. Moses was aware that the law given through himself justified nobody, and that it was impossible for the blood of

106. Or "being perfected."
107. Gal 3.1–3, followed by Gal 5.4–5.
108. Var. "Lord of all."
109. Cf. Rom 11.32; Gal 3.22.

bulls and goats to take away sin.[110] But our Lord Jesus Christ will redeem the world from its former offenses, and as he is the truth, the one who is by nature holy, he will sanctify with his own blood those who believe, and he will make them superior to death and corruption. And so he will give them entrance into the kingdom of heaven, the truly desirable and holy land where they shall abide on high, the beautiful city in heaven, the church of the firstborn, of which the designer and builder is God.[111]

That God the Father would help the Son in absolutely every way and would work alongside him when he became one of us, Moses clearly affirmed when he added: *"And the Lord, who goes with you, will not leave you nor forsake you."* Now the Son is indeed all-powerful and has incontestable authority, since he is by nature God. But he is said to be helped by the Father on account of his humanity, and this was fitting due to his being in the form of a servant, and due to the very manner of the economy of his Incarnation. And so the Son, that it might be believed that he became one of us, is formed with the proper weakness that pertains to humankind, saying to God the Father in heaven, "You will not abandon my soul to the grave, nor will you allow your holy one to see corruption."[112]

3. Now the teaching of the law according to its spiritual interpretation was doubtless not made known to anyone before the advent of Christ, but he later shone forth and was the cause of much wonder, appearing, as it were, in the sight of great and small when the Holy Spirit descended upon us, through whom we also understand the deep things of God. This is clear from the following passage which reads: *And Moses wrote all these words of this law in a book, and he gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to the elders of the people of Israel. And Moses commanded them that day, saying, "At the end of seven years, during the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel comes together to appear before the Lord your God in the place that the Lord shall choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Assemble the people, the men and the women and the*

110. Cf. Heb 10.4.
111. Cf. Heb 11.10.
112. Ps 16.10 (15.10 LXX); Acts 2.27.

children and the foreigner[113] *who is in your town, that they might hear and learn to fear* [676] *the Lord their God and that they should obey all the words of this law."*[114]

Note that Moses wrote down the law, but he also enjoined those chosen as priests, as well as the elders, that when seven years had passed, at the time of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, they were to assemble all the people, old and young, both women and children, and then to read it to those gathered together. From the fact that the reading should take place after seven years, one might learn that a considerable amount of time would pass until Christ should appear and the time for him to become a human being should arrive. For the number seven in divine Scripture is symbolic of a multitude, as I believe we find when it says, "The barren woman has given birth to seven children,"[115] and also, "Do not ever trust your enemy, for there are seven abominations in his heart,"[116] and in a certain place the teller of proverbs said, "The righteous person will fall seven times, and rise again."[117]

Note that in the seven years before the time of release, that is, during the time before the advent, the law was not read. Even if one might perhaps have read it, to read only part of it is the same as not being able to understand it at all. It became known, however, to both great and small, as I said, once the time of release had come.

The law commanded those of ancient times, saying, "Every seven years you shall grant a release, and this is how you shall do it: you shall remit every private debt which your neighbor owes you."[118] And again: "If you acquire a Hebrew servant, he shall serve you for six years, but in the seventh year you shall set him free."[119] So at the end of the ages, which is, as it were, in the seventh year, our Lord Jesus Christ released us from our debts, forgave those who had sinned, and freely pardoned those who owed

113. Lit. "proselyte."
114. Dt 31.9–12.
115. Sir 12.10.
116. Prv 26.25.
117. Prv 24.16.
118. Dt 15.1–2.
119. Ex 21.2.

him anything, according to the parable in the Gospel. Those who were slaves of sin, bound to the yoke of Satan, he made to appear glorious and resplendent by the Spirit of freedom.

The year of release was proclaimed at the time of Tabernacles, which points to the mystery of the resurrection, when the tabernacle, which is the body, of each one upon the earth will be erected. For when Christ was raised to life from the dead, having trampled down death and plundered Hades, "saying to those in bonds, 'Come out,' and to those in darkness, 'Show yourselves,'"[120] and then beautifying human nature by the Holy Spirit as the firstfruits of the human race and of those being re-created for holiness, he breathed upon the holy apostles and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."[121] Then the eyes of our minds were opened, and then we were enlightened, and we came to understand the law that[122] had remained obscure since ancient times, that which had been unknown to any of those of old. We were also then gathered together from the corners of the earth to the place he chose, which is the church, and to us who are now there the elect and holy instructors and teachers of mysteries interpret the law expressed in types and shadows. And so the [677] divine Paul clearly transposes the types into a contemplation of the spiritual meaning, and writes, "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled upon those who were defiled, sanctify with regard to the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ!"[123]

Seeing that when the people of Israel slaughtered the lamb, and attended to shadows, they were pointing to the figure of the mystery in Christ, Paul again said, "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed."[124] To others he also writes, "Tell me, you who wish to be under the law, do you not hear what the law says? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one from the maidservant, and one from the free woman. But the one that was from the maidservant was born according to the flesh, while the

120. Is 49.9.
121. Jn 20.22.
122. Var. "we alone came to understand that which . . ."
123. Heb 9.14.
124. 1 Cor 5.7; var. add "for us."

one from the free woman was born through a promise. These things may be taken allegorically, for the women are two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai, and bears children for slavery; this is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free; she is our mother."[125] So now, being instructed in the spiritual sense of the divine law, we receive it among us with reverence.

Yet that the importance[126] of the ministration expressed in types and shadows would later be curtailed, Moses also showed by means of a figure. For it is written, *When Moses finished writing all the words of this law in a book until they were complete, he gave command to the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, "Take this book, and put it at the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord our God."*[127] Note how he commanded that the law should be laid in one particular part of the ark and not right at the center of it, inasmuch as when the new revelations through Christ came to be, for which it was necessary that the more ancient ordinance should give way, it gave them a place, as it were, or rather it was moved out of the midst, so that that which was coming[128] might be brought in. It was not in fact removed from the holy ark, for the law given through Moses is accepted within the church, though it is not assigned first place. It was restricted, and placed to the side, giving way, as I said, to the incomparably superior revelations, that is, the divine revelations of the gospel, by means of which Christ has instructed us in the knowledge of God and of all virtue, through whom and with whom be glory to God the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

125. Gal 4.21–26.
126. Lit. "power."
127. Dt 31.24–26.
128. Var. "that which was better."

INDICES

GENERAL INDEX

This index refers to both Volumes 1 and 2 of the *Glaphyra*.

Aaron, *1:* 112–13, 120–22, 124, 129–30, 328; *2:* 29, 30, 55, 71, 79–81, 86–87, 89–93, 96, 104, 105–10, 114–15, 117–19, 125–26, 132, 135, 147, 159–66, 169–71, 173–75, 177–78, 197
Abel, *1:* 65–70, 72–75, 81, 276
Abihu, *2:* 105–8, 114
Abraham, *1:* 28, 71, 104, 105, 107–8, 123–29, 131–43, 146, 149–51, 152–54, 156–59, 160–64, 165–68, 188, 190–91, 204, 210, 248, 262, 309; *2:* 23, 24, 33, 70, 71, 236
Adam: first man, *1:* 24, 25, 26, 52, 57, 62–65, 66, 67, 70, 71, 75, 79, 81, 82, 88, 90, 91, 103; *2:* 33, 43, 79, 105, 128, 129, 131, 184, 192, 205, 208; Second Adam, *1:* 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 63, 90, 180, 207
adoption, *1:* 31, 34–36, 78, 231, 252; *2:* 44
adultery, adulterer, *1:* 315, 318, 319; *2:* 176, 218
advocate, *2:* 159, 167, 204
Alexandria, *1:* 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 19–22, 36
allegory, allegorical, *1:* 142, 153n104; *2:* 237. *See also* figure, figurative; shadow; similitude; type, typology
almond, almond tree, *1:* 234–35, 237–38
altar, *1:* 87, 99, 153, 203, 252, 253, 269; *2:* 36, 48, 106, 111, 117, 132, 133, 156, 162, 164, 166, 177, 195, 228, 230
Amalek, Amalekites, *2:* 17, 18n64
Amorites, *1:* 137; *2:* 16
angel, *1:* 58, 59, 82, 105, 108, 115n166, 120, 121, 123, 125, 139, 140, 148–49, 153, 167, 182, 183, 186, 191–94, 197, 200, 211, 234, 245–46, 254, 260, 309, 311, 314, 329, 335, 341, 349; *2:* 24, 25, 26, 56, 60, 69, 82, 85, 114, 121, 133, 136, 151, 159, 187, 215
anoint, anointing, *1:* 112, 114, 124, 195, 255, 257, 271, 310, 354; *2:* 42, 45, 51, 67, 117, 131, 184, 195, 199, 212
Antioch, Antiochene, *1:* 10, 14n47
apostles, apostleship, *1:* 16, 17, 128, 148, 151, 160n134, 178, 180, 189, 190, 194, 195, 199, 200, 207, 210, 220, 222, 231, 244, 245, 301, 302, 320, 321, 335, 336, 337, 341, 346; *2:* 54, 61, 100, 112, 134, 186, 228, 229, 236
Aquila, Greek translation, *1:* 84, 86
Ararat, Mount, *1:* 87, 98
archangel, *1:* 58, 89, 341
Arian, Arianism, *1:* 9, 28
ark (of covenant), *2:* 127, 160, 234, 237
ark (of Noah), *1:* 13, 81, 86–88, 93–95, 97–99, 100; *2:* 8
ascend, ascension (of Christ), *1:* 105,

ascend, ascension (*cont.*) 235, 266, 329, 349; *2:* 15, 76, 143, 159, 192
Asher, *1:* 212, 215, 216, 218, 340–41
ashes (of purification), *1:* 130; *2:* 127, 197–98, 200–203, 236
Assyrians, *1:* 114
Athanasius, *1:* 7
Athens, *1:* 203
atone, atonement, *1:* 324; *2:* 148, 156, 158–62, 191, 211
Aubert. J., *1:* 40

Babylon, Babylonians, *1:* 114, 115, 117, 118, 119; *2:* 151, 178
baptize, baptism, *1:* 16, 24, 33, 93, 96, 123, 169, 260, 268, 270, 339; *2:* 12, 35, 40, 48, 91, 102, 143, 144, 145, 156, 157, 158, 197, 202, 203, 214, 219, 225, 229
Beersheba, *1:* 140n38, 191n30
Benjamin, *1:* 213, 218, 222, 223, 274, 303, 304, 351, 353–54
Bethel, *1:* 269–71
Bilhah, *1:* 205, 212, 214, 215, 216, 218, 230, 242, 273, 275, 278, 284, 285, 316
birthright, *1:* 165, 172
bishop, *1:* 6, 15–18, 36, 200
blood: bloodshed, *1:* 66, 74, 79, 88, 268, 278, 320, 324; *2:* 137, 150, 211–13, 215; of Christ, *1:* 62, 74–75, 113, 241, 300, 324, 329; *2:* 30, 32, 37, 42, 43, 45, 79, 81, 82, 110, 133, 135, 142, 143n61, 144, 148, 157, 158, 160, 163, 166, 176, 193, 199, 200, 201, 214, 215, 236; of animal, *1:* 72, 73, 112, 124, 130, 279, 281, 310; *2:* 27, 31, 36, 42, 45, 51, 93, 106–7, 113, 114, 117, 122, 132, 133, 136, 139, 142, 156, 157, 158n115, 162, 163, 166, 184, 193, 197–98, 200, 201, 233, 236; water into blood, *1:* 317; *2:* 29, 77–79, 89, 206
branch, Christ as, *1:* 256, 344
bread, of life, *1:* 341; *2:* 189–90
burning bush, *1:* 295; *2:* 22, 24–27
burnt offering, *1:* 72, 87, 99, 107, 152, 153, 156, 157, 265; *2:* 129, 132, 135–36, 137, 161–62, 191, 193

Cain, *1:* 65–80, 84, 85, 276
Caleb, *2:* 182, 183, 186, 187, 188
Canaan (son of Ham), *1:* 100–102
Canaan (land of), Canaanite, *1:* 101, 161–63, 187, 189, 193n37, 242, 248, 267, 291, 295, 305, 306; *2:* 4, 6, 44, 147, 181
Cappadocian Fathers, *1:* 7
captive, captivity, *1:* 112, 113, 117, 118, 255; *2:* 215–20. *See also* exile
Cassel, J. D., *1:* 11n34, 19n62
cedar, *1:* 343–45; *2:* 139, 142, 144, 148, 156, 157, 197, 201, 202
Chadwick, H., *1:* 9, 10n29, 14n47
Chaldea, Chaldean, *1:* 136, 137, 138, 193, 204, 292
cherub, cherubim, *1:* 58, 226
chief shepherd, Christ as, *1:* 145, 331; *2:* 22
Christ, *passim*
christology, christological, *1:* 4, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29
church, *passim*
circumcise, circumcision: Hebrew rite, *1:* 92, 123, 131–33, 139–42, 149–50, 151, 179, 204, 251, 268, 320, 321, 322; *2:* 63, 81–83, 108, 166; of the Spirit, *1:* 112, 123, 149–50, 179, 322; *2:* 82–83
cleanse, cleansing, *1:* 233, 240, 286, 317, 323; *2:* 97, 98, 104, 111, 127, 138–40, 142, 145–46, 150–51, 156–59, 162–64, 167, 169, 179, 193, 197–98, 201, 203, 205, 215, 223, 225, 227, 229, 233, 236. *See also* purify, purification
Clement, of Alexandria, *1:* 7
condescension, of Christ, *1:* 257, 301. *See also* emptying, humility

consecrate, consecration, *1:* 92, 112, 121, 321; *2:* 30, 44, 46, 66, 94, 96, 103, 104, 112, 114, 133, 134, 138, 161–62, 164, 166. *See also* sanctify, sanctification
Corinth, Corinthians, *1:* 97, 216, 236
cornerstone, Christ as, *1:* 194, 245, 290; *2:* 230
Council of Ephesus, *1:* 10
covenant, *1:* 22, 28, 105, 106, 130, 131, 139, 142–43, 149, 166, 167, 231, 243, 250; *2:* 23, 59, 70, 80, 103, 106, 107, 124–26, 157, 158, 163, 227, 234, 237
Crawford, M. R., *1:* 10n32, 11n34, 12, 15, 18n61, 29n91, 182n237
cross: bearing our own, *2:* 200, 226; of Christ, *1:* 90, 156, 210, 301, 344, 349; *2:* 53, 76, 199, 208. *See also* crucify, crucifixion
crucify, crucifixion: of Christ, *1:* 328, 338; *2:* 72, 92, 136, 212, 214, 233; of the flesh, *1:* 53, 59; *2:* 98. *See also* cross
curse, *1:* 27, 57, 63, 64, 66, 69, 70, 74, 82, 87, 90, 99, 100, 101, 152, 166, 169, 177, 180, 182, 229, 308, 323; *2:* 46, 63, 131, 136, 192, 205
Cyrus, *1:* 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120, 123

Damascus, *1:* 134, 135
Dan, *1:* 212, 214, 215, 216, 218, 335–37, 339
Darius, *1:* 118
David, *1:* 325, 344
De adoratione et cultu in spiritu et veritate, 1: 4, 10, 11, 52n6, 73n94; *2:* 3
DelCogliano, M., *1:* 108n135
deliver, deliverance, *1:* 26, 60, 61, 69, 73, 75, 90, 93, 107, 111, 146, 154, 168, 185, 186, 193, 209, 213, 226, 233, 245, 246, 248, 249, 256, 266, 272, 278, 300, 308, 309, 311, 352; *2:* 15, 18, 21, 23, 30, 45, 51, 57, 80, 131, 135, 142, 165, 176, 193, 204, 215, 221, 223, 227. *See also* redeem, redemption; save, salvation
demon, *1:* 71, 83, 84, 92, 285, 348; *2:* 6, 7, 16–21, 23, 24, 36, 45, 47, 97, 165, 166, 172, 229, 233
demon-possessed, *2:* 173
Destroyer, *2:* 30, 36, 45, 117, 184
devil, *1:* 57, 62, 64, 71, 116; *2:* 6, 12, 23, 24, 32, 34, 35, 128, 173, 185, 218, 223
Didymus the Blind, *1:* 7, 109n135
Dinah, *1:* 267, 268n198, 269, 320, 321
disobey, disobedience, *1:* 63, 64, 90, 147, 190, 258, 264, 270, 297, 311; *2:* 13, 42, 66, 70, 74, 119, 121, 124, 128, 145, 146, 168, 180, 181, 183, 190, 205
Dothan, *1:* 278, 287, 288
drink offering, *1:* 270; *2:* 177, 191, 192

economy (divine), *1:* 28, 43, 88, 102n111, 111, 122, 127, 146, 166, 168, 186, 196, 265n180, 281, 282, 286, 291, 293, 325, 328; *2:* 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 22, 25, 34, 37n39, 38, 39, 76, 78, 96, 104, 108, 135, 136, 172, 176, 195, 199, 232, 234
Edom, *1:* 165, 172, 248, 259, 329; *2:* 206
Egypt, Egyptian, *1:* 106, 117, 140, 141, 142, 146, 148, 184, 198, 209, 279, 284, 288, 289, 295, 296, 301, 302, 303, 305, 307, 310, 314, 317, 324; *2:* 4, 5, 6, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 29, 30, 31, 32, 42, 44, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 59, 64, 70, 71, 74, 81, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 94, 96, 97n47, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 182, 183, 184, 188, 206, 211, 215, 217, 218, 221
Eldad, *2:* 67
Eleazar, the priest, *2:* 197, 199
Eliezer of Damascus, *1:* 134–35
Elim, *2:* 50, 54

Elliott, M. W., *1:* 10n32
Emmanuel (title of Christ), *1:* 20, 63, 72, 75, 79, 96, 97, 99, 102, 116, 117, 118, 119, 124, 125, 127, 147, 159, 169, 171, 181, 182, 195, 207, 235, 236, 237, 241, 255, 260, 264, 280, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 307, 308, 322, 324, 326, 327, 333, 342, 347, 348; *2:* 9, 12, 13, 16, 77, 81, 98, 109, 115, 123, 132, 133, 134, 143, 190, 192, 212, 213, 216, 219
emptying, of Christ, *1:* 121–22, 144, 219, 257, 301, 325, 347; *2:* 8, 11, 15, 23, 69, 199, 210. *See also* condescension, humility
end time (of the world), *1:* 222, 286; *2:* 13
Enoch (son of Cain), *1:* 77, 79
Enoch (son of Jared), *1:* 76, 79
Ephraim, *1:* 303, 305–7, 309–11, 352; *2:* 152
Epiphanius of Salamis, *1:* 108n135
Er (son of Judah), *1:* 291, 294–97
Esau, *1:* 165, 168, 170–80, 182–83, 187–89, 191, 194, 196, 248–53, 259, 269, 273
Ethiopia, Ethiopian, *1:* 117, 317; *2:* 169, 170
Eucharist, *1:* 10, 16; *2:* 61n145
eunuch, *1:* 302; *2:* 35
Eusebius of Caesarea, *1:* 7
Eve, *1:* 66, 73
exegesis, *1:* 4, 5, 7n19, 11n34, 14, 15, 16, 24n76
exile, captivity (Babylonian), *1:* 114, 118; *2:* 151

faithful, faithfulness, *1:* 163, 185, 211, 215, 223, 315, 341; *2:* 159, 169, 175, 179, 223, 233
fall (of humanity), *1:* 25, 26, 57, 61, 65
famine, *1:* 96, 302, 303, 304, 352; *2:* 4, 6, 190, 217
Father, God the, *passim*
figure, figurative, *1:* 44, 51, 93, 96, 98, 101, 104, 111, 115, 117, 118, 124, 125, 127, 129, 138, 143, 144, 146, 148, 149, 153, 154, 156, 159, 163, 170, 196, 204, 207, 208, 214, 218, 219, 225, 232, 233, 251, 262, 271, 273n5, 288, 299, 300, 301, 313, 314, 331; *2:* 6, 7, 9, 12, 19, 20, 24, 26, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 41, 43, 45, 46, 47, 49, 51, 53, 57, 59, 60, 61, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 74, 78, 81, 82, 83, 86, 90, 98, 99, 106, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 120, 122, 126, 127, 129, 133, 134, 136, 137, 140, 141, 143, 144, 145, 147, 149, 158, 160, 163, 164, 166, 167, 170, 171, 175, 177, 184, 186, 188, 193, 194, 195, 199, 203, 207, 208, 213, 216, 218, 224, 227, 236, 237. *See also* allegory, allegorical; shadow; similitude; type, typology
firstborn, *1:* 61, 66, 68, 71, 72, 73, 79, 119, 141, 165, 170, 171, 172, 174, 175, 176, 178, 181, 182, 189, 199, 204, 207, 214, 218, 220, 228, 237, 248, 251, 281, 290, 291, 295, 296, 297, 300, 307, 308, 310, 311, 314, 316, 317, 320, 349; *2:* 30, 31, 42, 43–48, 51, 55, 81, 82, 108, 111, 118, 129, 168, 206, 226, 234
firstfruits, *1:* 16, 69, 149, 189, 194, 198, 199, 207, 289; *2:* 66, 105, 113, 129–30, 186, 192, 194, 196, 236
flood, *1:* 86, 98, 99
foreknowledge, *1:* 61, 62; *2:* 34, 85
forgive, forgiveness, *1:* 62, 66, 75n105, 131, 132, 220, 263, 299; *2:* 40, 166, 191, 202, 214, 221n61, 231, 235

Gabriel, *1:* 89; *2:* 187
Gad, *1:* 212, 215, 216, 217, 218, 338–39
Galatia, Galatian, *1:* 142; *2:* 233
Galilee, *1:* 252, 331, 332; *2:* 19
Gentiles, *passim*
Gershom, *2:* 14, 21, 82

giants, *1:* 82, 84, 85; *2:* 182
Gibbon, E., *1:* 3
glory, glorify, *1:* 15, 26, 34, 55, 56, 58, 59, 62, 65, 71, 72, 77, 78, 79, 80, 83, 91, 92, 99, 104, 108, 111, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 127, 128, 130, 142, 144, 149, 152, 157, 158, 160, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 169, 171, 172, 174, 175, 179, 182, 184, 186, 195, 199, 201, 202, 207n85, 224, 231, 232, 233, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 246, 247, 251, 252, 254, 265, 271, 275, 276, 277, 280, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 289, 290, 295, 300, 303, 305, 307, 308, 311, 312, 325, 334, 336, 337, 343, 344, 346, 347, 348, 350, 351, 354; *2:* 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 20, 22, 28, 34, 37, 38, 48, 49, 53, 54, 55, 68, 70, 72, 75, 76, 80, 83, 84, 86, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 101, 102, 104, 110, 116, 122, 123, 126, 127, 134, 136, 138, 146, 159, 167, 168, 169, 175, 179, 182, 183, 189, 196, 205, 209, 214, 215, 218, 222, 223, 227, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 237
gods, false, *1:* 92, 193, 209, 242–45, 269, 270; *2:* 6, 31, 50, 97n47, 117–20, 218
grace, *1:* 33, 34, 61, 78, 96, 98, 117, 131, 133, 134, 166, 168, 174, 181, 184, 189, 199, 247, 252, 253, 254, 257, 260, 264, 272, 302, 305, 308, 311, 312, 331, 332, 340, 343, 345, 351; *2:* 24, 27, 28, 39, 40, 56, 61, 77, 94, 113, 126, 135, 145, 146, 158, 180, 186, 190, 195, 197, 202, 203, 210, 215, 224, 225n76, 229, 231, 233
grain offering, *2:* 117, 191, 192
Grant, R., *1:* 7
Greeks, *1:* 68, 85, 95, 190, 202, 203, 318, 332; *2:* 165, 172–73

Hades, *1:* 16, 20, 112, 116, 118, 226, 235, 257, 279n24, 289, 301, 310; *2:* 16, 18, 128, 130, 197, 236
Hagar, *1:* 134–35, 139–43, 148–51; *2:* 237
Ham, *1:* 82, 95, 96, 99–101
Haran, *1:* 164, 187, 191, 197, 200, 250, 252, 253, 274
Harleian Codex, *1:* 40, 90n46, 93n60, 274n9, 313n3, 318n26, 319n32; *2:* 69n180, 70n182, 98n55, 115n137, 129n5, 141n53, 143n63, 146n73, 150n83, 152n89, 154n100, 183n64, 191n104, 202n146, 205n156, 217n35, 218n42, 225n77
heresy, heretic, *1:* 8, 268; *2:* 40, 137
Herodians, *1:* 173, 217, 339
Hieracas of Leontopolis, *1:* 108n135
Hill, R. C., *1:* 4, 5n7, 5n8, 11n34, 39n2, 39n3, 46
Hillis, G. K., *1:* 18n61, 25n77, 29n91, 31n95, 33n106
holy of holies (of tabernacle), *1:* 112, 328; *2:* 71, 76, 133, 159–64, 192, 195
holy place (of tabernacle), *2:* 127, 137
Holy Spirit. *See* Spirit
Horeb, Mount, *1:* 177; *2:* 24, 44, 69, 86, 88
Hosea, *1:* 293
humility, of Christ, *1:* 63; *2:* 11. *See also* condescension, emptying
Hypatia, *1:* 3, 8
hyssop, *2:* 139, 142, 144, 148, 156, 157, 158, 197, 201, 202

idol, idolatry, *1:* 68, 117, 162, 163, 189, 193, 199, 204, 209, 210, 229, 236, 242, 244, 263, 295; *2:* 9, 51n100, 116, 119, 121, 173, 222
Incarnation, incarnate, *1:* 25, 28, 32, 34, 43, 61, 98n97, 102, 122, 147, 158, 186, 196, 229, 256n138, 265, 282, 286, 287, 348; *2:* 13, 37n39, 39, 76, 78, 108, 135, 172, 195, 199, 234

intercede, intercession, *2:* 159, 160, 178
Isaac, *1:* 27, 131, 134, 136, 140–43, 150–51, 152, 155–56, 159, 160–62, 164, 165–66, 168–70, 174, 176–77, 179–80, 187–92, 229, 242, 248, 250, 262, 309; *2:* 23, 24, 70, 71
Ishmael, *1:* 135, 139–41, 148, 150–51, 278, 289n78
Ishmaelite, *1:* 278, 288, 289, 301
Israel, *passim*
Issachar, *1:* 213, 214, 218, 220, 333–34

Jabbok, river, *1:* 258, 259, 260
Jacob, *1:* 17–18, 27, 30, 115, 165, 168, 170, 171–73, 176–80, 182, 185, 187–201, 203–5, 207, 209–10, 212–13, 218, 225–30, 232–34, 237–45, 246–53, 254, 258–71, 273–75, 277–78, 285, 295, 303, 304, 305–7, 309–11, 313–14, 316–18, 319–23, 326, 328, 347, 349, 350; *2:* 69, 180
Japheth, *1:* 82, 95, 96, 100–102
Jerome, *1:* 7, 12n34, 109n135, 109n139
Jerusalem: literal, *1:* 109–10, 114, 116, 118, 142–43, 149, 174, 199n58, 200, 215, 257, 284, 290, 315, 317, 319, 335, 336, 338, 342, 343; *2:* 90, 103, 137, 179, 212, 216, 217, 237; spiritual, *1:* 118, 142–43, 220; *2:* 133, 237
Jeshua (son of Jozadak), *1:* 118–20, 123
Jesse, *1:* 235, 325, 344; *2:* 71
Jethro, *1:* 198–99; *2:* 14, 18–22, 24, 170
Jewish-Christian relations, *1:* 8, 19–23
Jews, *passim*
Job, *1:* 116; *2:* 41
John the Baptist, *1:* 81, 211, 281, 298, 339, 343
John Chrysostom, *1:* 7, 39n3, 46
Jordan, river, *1:* 112, 123, 248, 249, 260, 297; *2:* 16, 228, 229
Josedek, *1:* 256
Joseph (husband of Mary), *1:* 91; *2:* 10
Joseph (patriarch), *1:* 19–20, 30, 213–14, 218, 222, 226, 227, 230, 232, 272–79, 281–90, 300–304, 305–11, 326, 346–47, 351
Joshua, *1:* 119n184, 123, 297; *2:* 16, 83, 115, 182, 183, 186–87, 231–33
Judah: patriarch, *1:* 212, 279, 290, 291–96, 299–300, 325, 332; tribe, *1:* 110, 114, 115, 118, 119, 123, 129, 154, 255, 256, 290, 295, 325, 327, 329, 335, 336, 344; *2:* 9, 152
Judea, *1:* 109, 163, 220, 289, 290, 338; *2:* 18, 19, 101, 103
judge, judgment, *1:* 79, 117, 131, 137, 147, 215, 216, 238, 256, 269, 306, 334, 335–37; *2:* 31, 39, 53, 62, 120, 170, 174, 175, 177
judgment seat, *1:* 77; *2:* 120
justify, justification, *1:* 27, 59, 61, 64, 73, 75, 89, 93, 95, 96, 97–98, 106, 118, 126, 131, 132, 133, 134, 136, 141, 142, 143, 145, 147, 159, 160, 166, 167, 168, 173, 180, 182, 186, 200, 207, 221, 237, 245, 251, 256, 261, 296, 298, 306, 312, 331, 334, 342, 354; *2:* 27, 28, 43, 49, 53, 54, 62, 67, 98, 120, 128, 136, 166, 201, 202, 204, 205, 231, 233

Keating, D. A., *1:* 3n3, 7n19, 11n34, 22n74, 24n76, 29n91, 31n95, 33n106, 64n54
Kerrigan, A., *1:* 11n34, 12n35, 42n7, 42n8, 44n13, 46
kingdom of heaven, *1:* 112, 123, 156, 190, 194, 196, 240, 260, 290, 295, 304, 318, 328, 334, 337; *2:* 10, 33, 46, 63, 101, 122, 172, 185, 232, 234
Kingsley, C., *1:* 3

Laban, *1:* 17, 30, 165, 187–89, 194, 196–99, 203–5, 207, 210, 227–29,

232, 234, 238, 240–45, 247–48, 250, 252, 259, 320
ladder, *1:* 191–92, 194, 197
Lamech (father of Noah), *1:* 81, 82, 88, 90
Lamech (son of Methuselah), *1:* 76, 79, 84
Lampe, G. W. H., *1:* 42n7, 43n10, 44n12
law, *passim*
Lawgiver (God), *1:* 319, 335; *2:* 31, 36, 39, 40, 44, 112, 142, 154, 158, 159, 165, 167, 171, 197, 203, 221
Leah, *1:* 30, 205, 208–10, 212–15, 218–21, 227, 229–31, 234, 239–40, 242, 244, 250, 252, 274, 275, 279–80, 320–21
Lebanon, *1:* 343
leprosy, leper, *1:* 286, 324n47; *2:* 73–75, 77, 138–43, 145, 147–52, 154–57, 167, 169–70, 176–79, 211n11, 229, 233
letter. *See* literal sense
Levi, *1:* 108, 112, 128, 129, 131, 212, 268, 270, 313, 319–22; *2:* 6, 7, 9, 10, 19
Levite, *1:* 112, 113, 128, 129, 324; *2:* 80, 211, 237
life, eternal, *1:* 51, 80, 130, 154, 190, 201, 220, 265, 280, 318; *2:* 53, 61, 66, 100, 194, 196
literal sense (letter), *1:* 12–14, 15, 19, 28, 36, 42, 51, 52, 70, 81, 87, 113, 135, 153, 157, 162, 177, 180, 183, 188, 192, 194, 196, 199, 206, 226, 227, 235, 243, 251, 253, 258, 279, 287, 291, 293, 306; *2:* 14, 41, 52, 53, 57n126, 89, 115n139, 121, 126, 129, 130, 131, 132, 140, 148, 173, 177, 188, 190, 198, 207, 216, 227, 228, 229, 231. *See also* spiritual sense
Lot, *1:* 107
Louth, A., *1:* 3n3
Manasseh, *1:* 303, 305–7, 309–11
mandrakes, *1:* 212–14, 218–20, 222
manna, *1:* 340; *2:* 54, 56, 58–66, 68, 85, 206
manuscript, *1:* 40, 41n5, 82, 93n60, 117, 313n3; *2:* 117n144
Marah, *2:* 49–53
de Margerie, B., 11n34, 12n35, 12n38, 18n61
Mary (mother of Christ), *1:* 10, 89; *2:* 187. *See also* Virgin
Maxwell, D., *1:* 5, 24n76
McGuckin, J. A., *1:* 3n3, 6n11, 7n18, 7n19, 8n21, 10n29, 11n34, 12n38, 25n77
Medad, *2:* 67
Medes, *1:* 85, 114, 115, 123
mediate, mediator, *1:* 33, 123, 167, 182n237, 211, 212, 305, 306, 314; *2:* 16, 17, 51, 56, 87, 88, 90, 94, 96, 105, 108, 109, 115, 118, 120, 159, 171, 207, 233
Melchizedek, *1:* 105, 107–12, 120–30, 131
Melchizedekians, *1:* 108n135
mercy seat, *2:* 127, 160, 162, 164
Meribah, *2:* 86n10
Mesopotamia, *1:* 161, 162, 165, 187, 242, 248, 259, 262, 306
Meunier, B., *1:* 64n54
Midian, Midianite, *1:* 198, 295; *2:* 14, 18, 19, 24, 81, 83, 170
Migne, J.-P., *1:* 4, 11n33, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 238n60, 244n92, 305n134, 324n47; *2:* 211n11
Miriam, *2:* 86, 90–91, 169–71, 173–77, 179
Moses, *passim*
mystery of Christ, *passim*
myth, *1:* 85

Nadab, *2:* 105–8, 114
Naphtali, *1:* 212, 214, 215, 216, 218, 331, 342, 345, 354
Nestorius, Nestorian, *1:* 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 19, 28, 29, 36

new creation, *1:* 25, 27, 53, 66, 90, 180, 191, 254, 317; *2:* 9, 13
Nicodemus, *2:* 125–26
Noah, *1:* 12, 13, 81–82, 86–91, 93, 95, 97–102; *2:* 33

O'Keefe, J. J., *1:* 11n34, 12n38, 13n44, 14n45, 14n47, 20
Onan (son of Judah), *1:* 291, 294, 296–97
Only-Begotten (title of Christ), *1:* 28, 63, 89, 93, 111, 145, 147, 154, 158, 228, 251, 257, 266, 287, 295, 301, 321, 347, 350; *2:* 23, 43, 45, 68, 72, 78, 91, 99, 112, 122, 144, 154, 159, 187, 199, 203, 232
Origen, *1:* 7, 12n34, 109n135

Palladius, *2:* 3
paradise, *2:* 33, 43, 184
Passover, *1:* 88n32; *2:* 30–31, 36, 41, 42, 81, 91, 135, 236
peace offering, *2:* 106, 111, 117, 128, 132, 134, 228
pearl, *1:* 13, 51, 196, 289, 340; *2:* 229
Pentecost, *1:* 104
persecute, persecution, *1:* 96, 142, 148, 151, 185, 187, 189, 190, 210, 223, 241, 244, 251, 252, 269, 302, 336, 352, 354; *2:* 11, 55, 213
Persia, Persians, *1:* 85, 114, 115, 123, 218, 281
Peter (the apostle), *1:* 269, 272; *2:* 100
Pharaoh, *1:* 198, 302, 303; *2:* 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 29, 30, 49, 70, 79, 80, 81, 88, 90, 109
Pharisees, *1:* 173, 210, 217, 284, 285, 286, 288, 316, 318, 337, 338, 339, 348; *2:* 60, 77, 172n19, 174, 176, 185, 189
philosophy, philosopher, *1:* 3, 7, 202n69
Pilate, Pontius, *1:* 156; *2:* 41, 92, 212, 213
plague, *1:* 209n96, 310; *2:* 29, 31, 53, 65, 139, 147–48, 149, 151–52, 154–55
pneumatology, *1:* 19, 23, 24n75, 29
polytheism, *1:* 92, 95, 193, 202n70, 225, 229, 236n49, 240, 297; *2:* 99, 114, 165
predestine, predestination, *1:* 61, 62
priest, priesthood, *1:* 72, 99, 107–9, 111, 112, 118–22, 124, 126–30, 131, 179, 198, 200, 252, 268, 303, 306, 310, 321, 322, 324, 335, 343; *2:* 9, 14, 18, 24, 80, 90, 91, 92, 93, 96, 103–4, 108, 113, 115, 129, 131, 132, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 142, 143, 147–52, 154–56, 159, 160, 163, 164, 171, 177, 191, 197, 199–200, 211, 234–35
promised land, *1:* 123, 193n37, 297; *2:* 32, 93, 122, 179, 183, 192, 228
prophecy, *1:* 180, 314, 320, 330, 347; *2:* 35
proselyte, *1:* 318; *2:* 191n103, 235n113
purify, purification, *1:* 98, 124, 130, 149, 269; *2:* 95, 97, 98, 110, 127, 148, 156, 157, 158, 195n117, 198, 202, 203, 204, 225, 227. *See also* cleanse, cleansing
Pusey, E. B., *1:* 3
Pusey, P. E., *1:* 4n6, 39

quail, *2:* 54, 56, 57, 58–60, 65, 85, 87

Rachel, *1:* 30, 197–98, 203, 205, 209–10, 212–15, 218–19, 221–24, 227, 229–32, 234, 239, 240, 242, 244, 250, 252, 274, 277, 279–80, 306, 307, 308, 320–21, 351
Rebekah, *1:* 160–64, 165, 169–71, 176, 187–89, 191, 196–97, 204, 251
rebirth, regeneration, *1:* 171, 200, 232, 251, 268, 304, 310; *2:* 48, 125–26, 164
recapitulation, *1:* 25, 33n106, 53, 62n45, 90n44; *2:* 106n95

Red Sea, *1:* 317; *2:* 49, 50, 90, 91, 206, 215
redeem, redemption, *1:* 62, 63, 65, 90, 114, 117, 119, 142, 179, 209, 255, 258, 266, 285, 295, 297, 317, 323, 324; *2:* 4, 43, 44, 46, 51, 69, 79, 81, 93, 105, 109, 114, 118, 119, 142, 143, 160, 163, 168, 189, 200, 205, 206, 211, 218, 221, 234. *See also* deliver, deliverance; save, salvation
regeneration. *See* rebirth
remnant, of Israel, *1:* 74, 97, 151, 220, 252, 258, 264, 298, 311; *2:* 77, 79, 122, 156, 186–87
repent, repentance, *1:* 22, 96, 150; *2:* 141, 142
rest, *1:* 79, 82, 89, 90, 161, 179, 280, 327, 334, 344; *2:* 58, 63, 188–89
restore, restoration, *1:* 16, 25, 26, 53n9, 60, 62, 65, 66, 70, 90, 99, 147, 253, 254, 284, 308, 328, 337, 344; *2:* 32, 73, 74, 79, 130, 141, 152, 155, 163, 167, 170, 180, 184, 192
resurrection, rising from dead, *1:* 16, 63, 116, 134, 149, 158, 195, 219, 220, 231, 235, 252, 289, 301, 310, 323, 328, 337, 348, 349, 351; *2:* 12, 15, 44, 45, 48, 76, 77, 79, 82, 92, 110, 131, 139, 157, 160, 166, 167, 192, 194, 195, 196, 200, 203, 214, 236
Reuben, *1:* 212, 214, 218, 220, 278, 279, 287–88, 290, 305, 307, 313, 314, 316–17, 320
Reuel, *2:* 14, 21, 22
revelation, *1:* 15, 17, 22, 61, 90, 102, 127, 141, 150, 154, 167, 180, 182n237, 188, 193, 197, 199, 201, 215, 234, 237, 252, 253, 254, 255, 266, 275, 276, 277, 302, 303, 313, 329, 341, 347; *2:* 31, 42, 62, 67, 68, 71, 80, 95, 96, 100, 101, 113, 146, 148, 156, 159, 163, 164, 172, 178, 227, 230, 232, 237
reward, *1:* 117, 134, 135, 136, 177, 207, 208, 214, 220–21, 227–28, 229, 230, 232, 233, 239, 241, 247, 282, 333, 347, 351; *2:* 146, 194
righteousness, righteous, *passim*
Rome, Roman, *1:* 339, 344
Russell, N., *1:* 6n11, 6n15, 7n19, 9n26, 9n28, 10n30, 10n31, 32n100, 64n54

Sabbath, *1:* 79, 94, 151, 179, 327; *2:* 49, 58, 62–63, 171
Salem, *1:* 107, 109, 111, 120, 126
Samaria, Samaritan, *1:* 201, 284; *2:* 52, 75, 172
sanctify, sanctification, *1:* 27, 35, 72, 73, 106, 113, 121–22, 124–25, 164, 174, 180, 207, 216, 221, 240, 245, 281, 299, 312, 327, 334, 342, 345; *2:* 32, 36, 37, 40, 42–43, 44, 48, 49, 51, 59, 67, 98, 101, 103–4, 105, 113, 114, 127, 136, 137, 138, 139, 141, 142, 145, 146, 158, 160, 163, 166, 184, 189, 199, 200, 201, 205, 231, 234, 236. *See also* consecrate, consecration
sanctuary, *1:* 128, 151; *2:* 133, 160, 161. *See also* tabernacle, temple
Sarah, *1:* 134, 139, 140, 143, 148–50, 159
Satan, *1:* 59, 71, 80, 215, 226, 229, 255, 256, 270, 353; *2:* 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 23, 80, 204, 207, 219, 222, 233, 236
save, salvation, *1:* 13, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 35, 52, 60, 61, 64, 65, 66, 74, 81, 86, 88, 89, 90, 93, 95, 97, 131, 142, 147, 154, 156, 163, 168, 169, 186, 187, 194n42, 195, 215, 220, 221, 223, 225, 226, 237, 238, 245, 246, 252, 254, 256, 257, 258, 263, 266, 281, 286, 289, 290, 298, 299, 300, 310, 311, 318, 329, 330, 335, 337; *2:* 7, 17, 19, 21, 22, 26, 29, 38, 44, 45, 46, 50, 51, 53, 54, 61, 69, 82, 104, 105,

save, salvation (*cont.*)
110, 112, 122, 123, 124, 141, 142, 146, 150, 151, 157, 159, 160, 163, 178, 180, 186, 187, 188, 196, 199, 202, 206, 207, 208, 219. *See also* redeem, redemption; deliver, deliverance
Seir, *1:* 248, 259
seraphim, *1:* 58, 121; *2:* 136
serpent, bronze, *2:* 205–9
serpent, Satan as, *1:* 58, 59; *2:* 207, 233
Seth, *1:* 75–76, 78–79, 81–82, 84, 88, 91
shadow, of the law, *1:* 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 44, 52, 70, 73, 98, 110, 113, 120, 124, 129, 133, 148, 162, 163, 196, 225, 226, 233, 237, 255, 260, 279, 323, 335, 338; *2:* 3, 16, 25, 27, 34, 41, 42, 49, 51, 60, 62, 63, 65, 68, 80, 85, 90, 91, 93, 94, 97, 103, 115, 122, 125, 126, 129, 138, 142, 143, 160, 161, 163, 175, 183, 184, 185, 216, 227, 229, 231, 232, 236, 237. *See also* allegory, allegorical; figure, figurative; similitude; type, typology
Shechem (city of), *1:* 267–68, 270, 278, 287, 288, 320
Shechem (son of Hamor), *1:* 267, 269
Shelah (son of Judah), *1:* 291, 292, 293, 294, 295n94, 296, 298, 299
Shem, *1:* 82, 95, 100–102
Sheridan, M., *1:* 42n6, 46
Shua (wife of Judah), *1:* 291, 294–95, 297
Simeon, *1:* 212, 268, 270, 307, 313, 319–22
similitude, *1:* 123, 124, 125, 130, 273n5. *Also see* figure, figurative; shadow; type, typology
sin, *passim*
sin offering, *1:* 157, 299; *2:* 129, 132, 135–37, 161–62, 191, 193
Sinai, Mount, *1:* 142, 146n67, 178; *2:* 69, 93, 96, 99, 101, 106, 117, 118, 174, 175, 237
Socrates Scholasticus, *1:* 8, 21
Sodom, *1:* 74, 107, 126
Solomon, *1:* 230; *2:* 137
Son, *passim*
Son of God, *1:* 24, 25, 182n237, 327, 350
Son of Man, *1:* 71; *2:* 143n63
soteriology, *1:* 9, 19, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36
Spirit, of God, *1:* 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29–36, 56, 61, 63, 64, 73, 75, 80, 82, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 103, 105, 108, 109, 110, 112, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 126, 130, 142, 143, 149, 150, 151, 152, 160, 163, 165, 169, 171, 179, 181, 183, 184, 189, 191, 194, 195, 200, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 216, 221, 223, 224, 231, 232, 236, 237, 241, 245, 246, 251, 252, 254, 255, 261, 271, 281, 290, 296, 299, 300, 303, 305, 310, 312, 317, 322, 327, 331, 332, 340, 341, 342, 354; *2:* 11, 13, 21, 22, 26, 28, 35, 40, 44, 49, 53, 54, 59, 62, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 81, 82, 83, 93, 94, 98, 99, 101, 102, 104, 105, 108, 110, 113, 116, 123, 124, 125, 127, 134, 135, 136, 138, 144, 146, 157, 158, 159, 167, 175, 178, 179, 184, 188, 189, 195, 196, 197, 200, 205, 208, 215, 222, 226, 227, 230, 231, 233, 234, 236, 237
spiritual sense (contemplation), *1:* 12–14, 15, 16, 19, 23, 28, 34, 36, 42, 81, 87, 108, 118, 120, 127, 136n26, 141, 149, 153, 162, 169, 173n197, 177, 188, 191, 194, 196, 207, 223, 227, 228, 230, 233, 235, 237, 250, 259, 279, 281, 293, 297, 299, 304, 313, 320, 321, 352; *2:* 3, 5, 14, 35, 41, 53, 57, 63, 80, 86, 90, 125, 126, 140, 148, 169, 183, 185, 191, 195, 204, 208, 216, 226, 227, 228, 229, 234, 236, 237. *See also* literal sense

suffer, suffering, *1:* 26, 32, 61, 63, 65, 66, 69, 89, 154, 156, 183, 185, 186, 208, 210, 223, 247, 250, 254, 260, 266, 267, 269, 270, 279, 290, 301, 302, 330, 337, 349, 351, 352; *2:* 5, 7, 14, 15, 16, 27, 36, 37, 55, 56, 62, 74, 78, 96, 98, 105, 119, 128, 137, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 148, 158, 159, 160, 166, 177, 183, 185, 196, 198, 200, 201, 204, 212, 214, 216
Symmachus, Greek translation, *1:* 84
synagogue, of the Jews, *1:* 148, 151, 162, 164, 208, 209, 210, 212, 214, 220, 221, 230, 231, 244, 252, 280, 295, 296, 314, 315, 316, 321, 329; *2:* 12, 13, 19, 60, 92, 146, 148, 149, 152, 154, 155, 157, 158, 159, 168–72, 177–78, 187, 216, 217, 222

tabernacle, tent of meeting, *1:* 112, 113, 121, 122, 124, 233, 266, 267, 269, 270, 328, 335; *2:* 86, 100, 127, 132, 133, 137, 161, 162, 164, 166, 169, 174, 176, 179n47, 182, 192, 195, 197, 198, 200, 201, 217, 236. *See also* sanctuary, temple
Tabernacles (feast of), *2:* 184n69, 234–35, 236
Tamar, *1:* 291–96, 298–300
temple, *1:* 116, 119, 156, 174, 222, 227n11, 230, 269, 270, 283, 328, 332, 337, 339; *2:* 25, 26, 137, 155, 156, 158, 220, 230. *See also* sanctuary, tabernacle
test, testing, trial, *1:* 152, 153, 157, 158, 159, 163n143, 173, 185, 186, 216–18, 223, 247, 249, 270, 302, 336, 338n116, 339; *2:* 38, 50, 52, 55, 56, 84–87, 152, 183, 188, 201, 207
thank offering, *1:* 68, 87, 241, 354; *2:* 173n25
Theotokos, *1:* 10
third day, *1:* 153, 155; *2:* 51, 94, 95, 97, 99, 195, 198, 203
tithe, *1:* 112, 128, 129, 217, 218
tower of Babel, *1:* 103–5
trial. *See* test
Trinity, trinitarian, *1:* 7, 23, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34, 94, 122, 283; *2:* 60
type, typology, *1:* 14, 16, 17, 25, 27, 30, 31, 44, 52, 73, 81, 98, 108, 112, 113, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, 128, 129, 130, 131, 138n30, 141, 147, 148, 149, 162, 163, 165, 168, 169, 172, 177, 182, 183, 189, 191, 193, 195, 196, 197, 215, 229, 230, 231, 245, 250, 252, 260, 271, 273n5, 281, 294, 297, 298, 304, 308, 313, 320, 321, 333, 351; *2:* 16, 27, 30, 42, 49, 51, 62, 63, 80, 86n12, 90, 91, 93, 94, 101n74, 103, 104, 109, 115, 117, 122, 138, 160, 161, 171, 173, 175, 184, 185, 217, 226, 232, 236, 237. *See also* allegory, allegorical; figure, figurative; shadow; similitude
tyranny, tyrant, *1:* 3, 266, 254, 256; *2:* 5, 8, 23, 32, 105, 139, 208

unbelief, unbeliever, *1:* 97, 111, 134, 136, 164, 216, 236, 261, 266, 297; *2:* 42, 77, 93, 141, 146, 157, 172, 174, 183, 188–89, 203, 212n16

veil, *1:* 15, 31, 231–32, 237, 292, 326; *2:* 70, 80, 81, 123–26, 160, 162, 164, 167, 227
virgin, virginity, *1:* 161n138, 198, 252, 267, 284, 296, 315, 316, 333; *2:* 138
Virgin, *1:* 89, 116, 125, 156, 283, 308, 325, 328, 344, 350; *2:* 25, 144, 156, 187, 194. *See also* Mary

Weinandy, T. G., *1:* 3n3, 7n19, 11n34, 29n91, 33n106
Wickham, L., *1:* 8, 9n27, 10n29
Wilken, R. L., *1:* 7n19, 9n24, 10n32, 11n34, 12n38, 19n62, 21n73, 24, 25n78
wisdom, *1:* 51, 62, 97, 157, 163, 196,

wisdom (*cont.*)
203, 210, 213, 233, 266, 277, 296, 299, 302, 306, 340; *2:* 3, 4, 34, 79, 80, 102, 175, 189, 200, 226
Word (*Logos*), *1:* 32, 55, 98, 112, 121, 146, 156, 181, 186, 229, 232, 266, 283, 284; *2:* 15, 18, 22, 26, 39, 40, 69, 71, 78, 79, 80, 97, 100, 102, 144, 145, 156, 189, 201
works, *1:* 61, 89, 132, 166, 177, 178, 210, 233, 247, 256, 261, 265, 352; *2:* 24, 42, 199, 140, 143, 166, 172, 188, 197, 203, 233

Yanney, R., *1:* 10n30
yoke, *1:* 89, 97, 101, 139, 143, 177, 182, 183, 184, 192, 209, 214, 216, 236, 252, 324; *2:* 7, 23, 24, 49, 52, 79, 88, 112, 113, 122, 187, 197, 199, 211, 213–14, 236
Young, F. M., *1:* 11n34, 14n47, 43, 47

Zachariades-Holmberg, E., *1:* 41n4, 47
Zebulun, *1:* 213, 214, 218, 220, 330–31, 333, 354
Zechariah (father of John), *1:* 81
Zerubbabel, *1:* 118–20, 123
Zilpah, *1:* 205, 212, 214, 215, 216, 218, 230, 242, 273, 275, 278, 284, 285
Zipporah, *2:* 14, 21, 82, 83

INDEX OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

This index refers to both Volumes 1 and 2 of the *Glaphyra*.

Old Testament

Genesis
1.9: *1:* 54
1.14–15: *1:* 55
1.16: *1:* 54; *2:* 34
1.26–27: *1:* 70
2.7: *1:* 24, 25, 56
2.22: *1:* 157
3.15: *1:* 337
3.16: *1:* 57
3.17: *1:* 57
3.19: *1:* 103
4.1–16: *1:* 66
4.17: *1:* 76
4.17–19: *1:* 76
4.23: *1:* 84
4.23–24: *1:* 76
4.24: *1:* 66
4.25: *1:* 75
4.26: *1:* 76, 78, 81
5.1: *1:* 70
5.3: *1:* 75
5.6: *1:* 76
5.8–9: *1:* 76
5.11–12: *1:* 76
5.14–15: *1:* 76
5.17–18: *1:* 76
5.29: *1:* 82
5.32: *1:* 82
6.1–4: *1:* 82
6.3: *1:* 103
6.5: *2:* 139
6.5–8: *1:* 86
6.13–16: *1:* 86
6.18–20: *1:* 86
7.2: *1:* 86
7.7: *1:* 95
7.8–9: *1:* 95
8.4: *1:* 87
8.6–12: *1:* 87
8.11: *1:* 98
8.21: *1:* 98; *2:* 139
8.21–22: *1:* 87
9.1–2: *1:* 87, 99
9.18–27: *1:* 101
11.1–4: *1:* 103
12.3: *1:* 166
13.15: *1:* 141
14.17–20: *1:* 108
14.21: *1:* 126
14.22–23: *1:* 126
15.1–6: *1:* 134
15.6: *1:* 132
15.7: *1:* 141
15.7–17: *1:* 28, 137
15.8: *1:* 141
16.7–9: *1:* 139
16.8–9: *1:* 148
16.11: *1:* 289
17.5: *1:* 133
17.8: *1:* 141
17.9–14: *1:* 139
17.10: *1:* 149
17.14: *1:* 149
18.18: *1:* 166
21.9: *1:* 140,
21.10: *1:* 140, 143, 150
21.12: *1:* 159, 168
21.12–20: *1:* 140
21.19: *1:* 151
21.31: *1:* 191
22.1–3: *1:* 152
22.4–6: *1:* 153
22.7–12: *1:* 153
22.13: *1:* 153
22.17: *1:* 166
22.18: *1:* 166
22.19: *1:* 153
24.1–4: *1:* 161
24.7: *1:* 141
24.14: *1:* 141
24.67: *1:* 164
25.19–34: *1:* 165
25.22: *1:* 188
25.23: *1:* 188, 251
25.25: *1:* 170
25.26: *1:* 170, 228
26.4: *1:* 166
26.32–33: *1:* 192
27.1–4: *1:* 176
27.5–16: *1:* 176
27.11: *1:* 170
27.18–19: *1:* 177
27.22: *1:* 179
27.26–29: *1:* 177
27.28: *1:* 181, 229

Genesis (*cont.*)
27.29: *1:* 181, 182, 229
27.35: *1:* 177
27.38–40: *1:* 177
27.41–45: *1:* 187
27.46: *1:* 187
28.1–4: *1:* 188
28.10–19: *1:* 192
28.19: *1:* 270
29.1–14: *1:* 197
29.15–30: *1:* 205
29.17: *1:* 280, 321
29.34: *1:* 321
29.35: *1:* 295, 325
30.3: *1:* 212
30.6: *1:* 335
30.8: *1:* 215
30.11: *1:* 217
30.13: *1:* 217, 340
30.14–16: *1:* 213
30.18: *1:* 333
30.20: *1:* 330
30.22–24: *1:* 213
30.25–26: *1:* 227
30.29–36: *1:* 227
30.37–43: *1:* 234
30.43–31.9: *1:* 238
31.3: *1:* 239
31.9: *1:* 240
31.10–12: *1:* 235
31.14–16: *1:* 240
31.17–25: *1:* 242
31.30: *1:* 242
31.32: *1:* 242
31.34: *1:* 242
31.35: *1:* 242
31.43–44: *1:* 243
31.45–48: *1:* 243
31.50: *1:* 243
32.1–2: *1:* 245
32.3–12: *1:* 248
32.23–31: *1:* 258
32.30: *1:* 264
33.4: *1:* 250
33.17: *1:* 266
33.18: *1:* 267
34.1: *1:* 267
34.30: *1:* 268
34.31: *1:* 320
35.1–4: *1:* 270
35.6: *1:* 270
35.14–15: *1:* 270
35.16–18: *1:* 213
35.22: *1:* 314
37.2: *1:* 283
37.2–4: *1:* 273
37.6–8: *1:* 276
37.9–11: *1:* 277
37.13–14: *1:* 278
37.15–17: *1:* 278
37.19–22: *1:* 278
37.23–24: *1:* 278
37.24: *1:* 289
37.25–28: *1:* 279
37.29–30: *1:* 279
37.32: *1:* 279
37.33: *1:* 279
37.35: *1:* 279
38.1–5: *1:* 291
38.7: *1:* 291
38.13–14: *1:* 292
38.15–18: *1:* 292
38.24–26: *1:* 293
38.27–30: *1:* 293
39.21: *1:* 302
46.27: *2:* 4
48.1–7: *1:* 306
48.6: *1:* 307
48.8–16: *1:* 309
48.19: *1:* 311
48.20: *1:* 311
49.1–2: *1:* 314
49.3–4: *1:* 314
49.5–7: *1:* 319
49.8: *1:* 295
49.8–12: *1:* 325
49.13: *1:* 330
49.14–15: *1:* 333
49.16–18: *1:* 335
49.19: *1:* 338, 339
49.20: *1:* 17, 340
49.21: *1:* 342
49.22: *1:* 351
49.22–26: *1:* 347
49.27: *1:* 351

Exodus
1.5: *2:* 4
1.7: *2:* 4
1.11: *2:* 5, 23
1.22: *2:* 5
2.1–10: *2:* 8
2.11–21: *2:* 14
2.15–21: *1:* 199
2.23–25: *2:* 23
3.1: *2:* 14
3.1–6: *2:* 24
3.6: *2:* 70
3.18: *2:* 109
4.6–7: *2:* 73
4.9: *2:* 77
4.10: *1:* 113; *2:* 79, 101, 109
4.13: *1:* 113; *2:* 79, 109
4.14: *2:* 80
4.14–15: *1:* 113
4.16: *2:* 80
4.21: *2:* 81
4.22: *1:* 71, 141, 214
4.22–23: *2:* 82
4.24–26: *2:* 82
5.1–4: *2:* 29
5.3: *2:* 29, 109
7.1–2: *2:* 109
12.1–4: *2:* 30
12.5–10: *2:* 31
12.11: *2:* 31
12.12–13: *2:* 31
12.13: *1:* 310
12.15: *2:* 31
12.16: *2:* 31
12.34: *2:* 55
13.3: *1:* 295; *2:* 215
13.4: *2:* 32
13.11–14: *2:* 44
14.11: *2:* 221

14.25: *2:* 215
15.1–2: *2:* 50
15.22–27: *2:* 50
16.1–5: *2:* 55
16.3: *2:* 221
16.13–20: *2:* 58
16.23–24: *2:* 58
16.27–29: *2:* 58
16.29: *2:* 58
17.1–7: *2:* 86
17.16: *2:* 18
18.9: *2:* 215
19.8: *1:* 178
19.9: *2:* 97
19.10–13: *2:* 94
19.15: *2:* 97
19.16–19: *2:* 95
19.20–24: *2:* 96
20.3: *2:* 119, 218
20.12: *1:* 100
20.13–14: *2:* 218
20.16: *2:* 218
20.25: *2:* 230
21.2: *2:* 235
21.24–25: *1:* 91
22.29–31: *2:* 44
23.26: *1:* 206
24.1–2: *2:* 106
24.3: *2:* 106
24.4–8: *2:* 106
24.7: *1:* 178, 215
24.9–11: *2:* 107
24.12–13: *2:* 115
30.13: *2:* 47
32.1–6: *2:* 117
32.7: *1:* 184
32.7–8: *2:* 120
32.10–11: *2:* 120
32.20: *2:* 121
32.25–28: *2:* 121
32.32: *1:* 263
33.7: *2:* 121
33.12: *2:* 94, 173
34.27–35: *2:* 125
34.33–34: *1:* 15

Leviticus
2.14–16: *2:* 129
3.1: *2:* 128
3.1–5: *2:* 132
4.28: *1:* 144
6.25–29: *2:* 136
8.22–23: *1:* 124
11.4: *1:* 163
14.1–9: *2:* 140
14.34–35: *2:* 148
14.42: *2:* 152
14.43: *2:* 152
14.46–47: *2:* 155
14.48: *2:* 152
14.48–53: *2:* 148
16.2: *2:* 160
16.3–10: *2:* 161
16.11: *2:* 162
16.12–14: *2:* 162
16.15: *2:* 162
16.18–19: *2:* 162
16.20–22: *2:* 163
17.3–4: *2:* 137
18.5: *1:* 166
19.2: *2:* 227
23.5: *1:* 88
23.7–8: *2:* 184
23.10–14: *2:* 192
23.11: *2:* 195
23.35–36: *2:* 184
23.39–40: *2:* 184
24.20: *1:* 91

Numbers
5.2: *2:* 140
11.4–6: *2:* 64
11.10: *2:* 64
11.15: *2:* 64
11.16–17: *2:* 65
11.21: *2:* 65
11.29: *2:* 67
11.33–34: *2:* 65
12.1–15: *2:* 169
12.7: *2:* 175
12.16–13.3: *2:* 181
13.33: *2:* 182
14.8: *2:* 182
14.10: *2:* 183
14.20–24: *2:* 183
14.29: *1:* 297
19.1–10: *2:* 197
19.11–16: *2:* 197
19.13: *2:* 198
20.1–13: *2:* 87
20.4: *2:* 88
21.4–9: *2:* 206
21.5: *2:* 221

Deuteronomy
4.20: *1:* 295; *2:* 215
4.24: *2:* 25
5.7: *2:* 218
5.16: *1:* 100
5.17–18: *2:* 218
5.20: *2:* 218
5.27: *1:* 178
6.5: *1:* 100
6.7: *2:* 111
7.3: *2:* 171
7.14: *1:* 206
9.13–14: *1:* 209, 263
10.12: *2:* 41
12.31: *2:* 218
15.1–2: *2:* 235
18.15: *2:* 171
18.18: *1:* 123
19.21: *1:* 91
21.1–9: *1:* 324; *2:* 212
21.6–7: *2:* 213
21.10–14: *2:* 216
21.23: *2:* 136
23.9–14: *2:* 223
27.1–8: *2:* 228
27.26: *1:* 166
31.7–8: *2:* 232
31.9–12: *2:* 235
31.24–26: *2:* 237
32.11: *2:* 215
32.18: *2:* 118
32.40: *1:* 143
32.43: *1:* 349

Joshua
10.17–19: *2:* 16

1 Samuel
2.5: *1:* 282
12.2–3: *1:* 257
12.5: *1:* 257

1 Kings
4.28: *1:* 126

1 Chronicles
15.19: *2:* 209

2 Chronicles
20.7: *1:* 160

Job
5.13: *1:* 340
5.23: *1:* 249
16.13: *1:* 352
25.5: *2:* 202
38.2: *1:* 158
38.3: *2:* 41
38.16–17: *1:* 116
40.7: *2:* 41
42.2: *2:* 57

Psalms
(modern numbering)
1.1: *1:* 322
2.1–2: *1:* 257
2.6: *2:* 17
2.6–7: *2:* 232
2.8: *1:* 333
2.9: *1:* 328
4.6: *2:* 41
5.3: *1:* 263
5.3–4: *2:* 114
10.17: *1:* 164, 175
14.1: *1:* 288
14.3: *1:* 288; *2:* 12
15.5: *2:* 108
16.5: *2:* 180
16.10: *1:* 146; *2:* 234
18.2: *2:* 223
18.11: *1:* 233
18.11–12: *2:* 100
18.37–38: *1:* 326
18.43–44: *1:* 175, 307
18.44–45: *1:* 175, 262
19.9–10: *1:* 334
19.12: *2:* 193, 226
21.9: *1:* 147
21.11: *1:* 261
22.16–18: *2:* 12
22.22: *1:* 35, 121; *2:* 44
23.4: *1:* 235, 328; *2:* 72
23.5: *2:* 131, 195
24.3–5: *2:* 108
26.5: *1:* 322
26.7: *2:* 111
27.4: *1:* 174; *2:* 220
27.4–5: *1:* 269
30.3: *1:* 289
30.11: *2:* 131
31.15: *1:* 334
32.1–2: *1:* 132
32.7: *1:* 168
33.6: *2:* 71, 74
34.7: *1:* 186, 246
34.15: *1:* 77, 263
35.7–8: *1:* 173
35.23: *1:* 216
36.7–9: *1:* 152; *2:* 92
37.17: *1:* 235; *2:* 71
38.9: *2:* 134
39.3: *2:* 38
39.12–13: *1:* 78, 267
40.6–8: *1:* 157; *2:* 129
44.6–7: *2:* 180
45.2: *2:* 10
45.3: *2:* 10
45.6: *1:* 328
45.7: *1:* 271
45.10–11: *1:* 160, 241
45.11: *1:* 210, 346; *2:* 221
45.16: *1:* 336
46.4: *2:* 92
47.9: *2:* 107
48.14: *1:* 286
49.1: *1:* 113
49.11: *1:* 78
49.12: *2:* 205
49.14: *1:* 226
50.1–3: *2:* 69
50.9–12: *1:* 73
50.14–15: *1:* 73
52.3–4: *1:* 95
52.5: *1:* 96
59.11: *1:* 74
61.3: *1:* 105
63.1: *1:* 262
65.9: *1:* 340, 350
66.4: *1:* 349
66.10: *2:* 201
66.10–12: *1:* 186; *2:* 85
68.6: *1:* 173
68.27: *1:* 354
68.28: *1:* 308
69.21: *2:* 13
69.27: *2:* 213
69.28: *1:* 74
72.7: *2:* 35
75.4–5: *2:* 176
76.1: *2:* 101
77.18: *2:* 99
78.8: *2:* 118
78.19–20: *1:* 297
78.24–25: *2:* 56, 215
80.1–2: *1:* 226
82.6: *1:* 34, 78
83.16: *2:* 177
84.4: *1:* 59
84.7: *2:* 3, 54
86.9: *1:* 287
88.5: *2:* 192
88.23: *1:* 326
89.6: *1:* 34, 182, 350
89.7: *1:* 155

89.22: *1:* 146
91.1–3: *2:* 223
91.11: *1:* 246
91.11–13: *1:* 195
91.13: *1:* 168
91.14–15: *2:* 223
91.14–16: *1:* 186
92.12: *2:* 54
92.13: *1:* 96
95.7: *1:* 144, 239
99.1: *1:* 287
102.18: *1:* 199, 317; *2:* 187
103.2–4: *2:* 143
103.14: *2:* 220
103.15: *2:* 25
103.21: *1:* 120
104.15: *1:* 181
107.33–34: *2:* 27
110.1: *1:* 349
110.2: *1:* 328
110.4: *1:* 121, 131
113.9: *1:* 218
114.8: *2:* 215
115.15: *1:* 221, 331; *2:* 131
116.12: *2:* 196
116.15: *2:* 48
118.22: *1:* 245, 290
118.24: *1:* 256; *2:* 99
119.11: *2:* 110
119.18: *1:* 214
119.19: *1:* 78
119.32: *1:* 97, 216, 236
119.45: *1:* 236
119.96: *1:* 236
119.105: *1:* 51
119.140: *2:* 39
122.1: *1:* 174
126.3: *1:* 181
127.3: *1:* 333
129.8: *1:* 221
130.3–4: *2:* 202
132.14: *2:* 123
136.12: *2:* 215
139.13: *2:* 134
144.4: *2:* 205
148.12: *2:* 138

Proverbs
1.31: *1:* 60
8.18: *1:* 340
10.14: *2:* 226
15.1: *1:* 249
18.21: *2:* 168
24.11: *1:* 154
24.16: *2:* 235
26.11: *2:* 117
26.25: *2:* 235
30.17: *1:* 100

Song of Songs
1.3–4: *2:* 164
1.15: *1:* 210
2.1: *1:* 27, 180
2.3: *1:* 334
2.10–12: *2:* 91
2.14: *1:* 145, 212
2.16: *1:* 316
4.3: *2:* 157
7.8: *2:* 54

Wisdom
1.13: *2:* 205
2.24: *2:* 128
4.3: *1:* 135

Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)
2.1–2: *1:* 247; *2:* 38
7.28: *1:* 100
12.10: *2:* 235

Isaiah
1.2: *1:* 214
1.2–3: *2:* 9
1.3: *1:* 225
1.9: *1:* 74; *2:* 211
1.11–13: *1:* 72
1.15: *1:* 74, 88
1.16: *1:* 107, 152; *2:* 225
1.17–18: *1:* 233
1.21: *1:* 174, 215
1.21–22: *1:* 315
3.9–10: *1:* 322
5.1: *1:* 145
5.14: *1:* 226; *2:* 65
6.9: *1:* 225
7.15: *1:* 350
8.18: *1:* 310
9.1–2: *1:* 331
9.6: *1:* 311
10.14: *1:* 254
10.22: *1:* 97, 252, 298, 311
11.1: *1:* 235
11.5: *2:* 41
12.3: *1:* 163, 237; *2:* 54
13.3: *1:* 85
22.15–21: *2:* 154
25.8: *2:* 130
26.2–3: *1:* 221, 331
26.7–8: *1:* 221, 331
26.16: *2:* 51
26.18: *1:* 238, 300
27.13: *2:* 101
28.14: *1:* 96
28.16: *1:* 194, 245, 290; *2:* 230
28.19–20: *1:* 97, 236
29.13: *1:* 202, 255, 288
30.22: *1:* 245
32.1: *1:* 335
35.1: *2:* 26, 214
35.3–4: *1:* 90, 238
40.6: *2:* 205
40.10–11: *1:* 90, 238
40.12: *2:* 40
40.13: *1:* 54
40.28: *1:* 207
41.8: *1:* 160
41.10: *2:* 75
41.18: *2:* 27
41.18–19: *1:* 345
42.11: *2:* 214

Isaiah (*cont.*)
43.10: *1:* 99
43.18–19: *1:* 53
43.20–21: *1:* 353
44.3: *1:* 221
44.17: *2:* 95
44.24–45.5: *1:* 115
44.25: *1:* 115
44.28: *1:* 117
45.3: *2:* 170
45.4: *1:* 117
45.12: *2:* 75
45.12–16: *1:* 117
45.18: *1:* 55
46.3–4: *1:* 354
46.9–10: *1:* 158
48.4: *1:* 170
49.9: *1:* 16, 116, 289; *2:* 236
49.12: *1:* 218, 281
49.18: *1:* 218, 281
50.10: *2:* 41
51.5: *1:* 256
51.11: *1:* 303
52.6–7: *2:* 91
52.11: *2:* 141, 227
53.1: *1:* 319; *2:* 74
53.2: *1:* 102
53.2–3: *2:* 11
53.4: *2:* 75, 167
53.5: *2:* 128, 167, 204
53.5–6: *1:* 89
53.8: *2:* 40
53.9: *1:* 145; *2:* 160, 195
53.12: *1:* 145; *2:* 76, 208
54.1: *1:* 142, 218
54.2–3: *1:* 154
54.17: *2:* 180
55.8–9: *1:* 54
55.13: *1:* 345
56.1: *1:* 256
57.3–4: *2:* 176
57.10: *1:* 173
58.14: *2:* 180
59.9: *1:* 261; *2:* 124
61.1–2: *1:* 255
61.10: *1:* 169; *2:* 123, 219
61.11: *1:* 169
62.1: *1:* 147
62.1–2: *1:* 186
62.5: *1:* 165
62.10: *1:* 221, 331
63.1: *1:* 329
63.2: *1:* 329
64.6: *2:* 75
65.1–2: *2:* 70
65.15–16: *1:* 53
65.16: *1:* 303
66.1: *1:* 230
66.12: *2:* 92

Jeremiah
1.11–12: *1:* 237
2.10–13: *1:* 92
2.12–13: *1:* 202
2.13: *2:* 20
2.22: *1:* 317
2.27: *2:* 70, 95
2.28: *1:* 92
3.1: *1:* 316
3.1–5: *1:* 212
3.2–4: *1:* 315
3.8: *1:* 211
3.22: *2:* 142
4.14: *2:* 151
4.31–5.1: *2:* 179
5.12: *1:* 353
5.21: *1:* 280; *2:* 123
5.26: *1:* 173
6.17–19: *2:* 9, 100
6.20: *1:* 72
8.8–9: *2:* 189
9.1: *2:* 210
10.21: *2:* 186
11.13: *1:* 92
11.16–17: *1:* 342
12.6: *1:* 327
12.7: *2:* 177
12.7–8: *1:* 252
13.23: *1:* 317
13.25: *2:* 168, 181
14.7–9: *2:* 150
14.10: *1:* 272
22.17: *1:* 210
22.29–30: *2:* 153
23.5–6: *1:* 256
23.16: *2:* 153
31.31: *2:* 59
31.31–34: *1:* 106
31.33: *1:* 231
46.3: *2:* 222
49.30: *2:* 227

Baruch
3.36–38: *2:* 69

Lamentations
4.20: *1:* 257

Ezekiel
3.7: *2:* 146
4.6: *2:* 151
5.12: *2:* 155
11.16: *1:* 151
13.3: *2:* 153
16.43: *1:* 208
17.22–24: *1:* 344
18.30: *2:* 142
20.34: *2:* 227
20.37: *2:* 71
23.2–4: *1:* 284
28.14: *1:* 58
34.3: *1:* 285
34.14: *1:* 72, 145, 226
36.24–25: *2:* 158

Daniel
12.2: *1:* 219

Hosea
1.2–3: *1:* 293
1.6–9: *1:* 293
1.11: *1:* 255

2.2: *1:* 211, 299
2.6: *1:* 221
2.19: *1:* 212
2.19–20: *1:* 211
3.4–5: *1:* 253; *2:* 156
5.7: *1:* 92
5.14: *1:* 352
6.5: *2:* 153
6.6: *1:* 107, 265
7.13: *1:* 285; *2:* 168
7.16: *1:* 285
9.17: *1:* 104
10.12: *1:* 334
11.8–9: *2:* 152
13.14: *2:* 197

Joel
1.13: *2:* 177
2.9: *2:* 37
3.4–6: *1:* 332

Amos
3.8: *1:* 328
3.12: *1:* 298
5.1–2: *2:* 147
5.14: *2:* 154
8.11–12: *2:* 190
9.9: *2:* 155

Micah
2.9: *2:* 153
2.10: *2:* 153
4.6–7: *2:* 156
6.4: *2:* 90
7.1–2: *2:* 150
7.14: *1:* 72

Habakkuk
2.4: *1:* 166

Zephaniah
3.14–15: *1:* 258
3.16–17: *1:* 90

Haggai
1.1–4: *1:* 118
1.14: *1:* 118
2.3: *1:* 119
2.8–9: *1:* 119

Zechariah
1.12: *2:* 152
1.16: *2:* 152
6.12: *1:* 256
9.9: *1:* 338
9.16: *1:* 196, 245; *2:* 229
11.1–2: *1:* 343
11.9: *1:* 280
11.12–13: *2:* 201
12.11: *1:* 343

Malachi
2.7: *1:* 335
3.2: *2:* 102
4.2: *2:* 60
4.5–6: *1:* 253

New Testament

Matthew
1.21: *1:* 89
3.10: *1:* 343
3.11: *1:* 96; *2:* 144
5.5: *1:* 91, 183, 240
5.10: *1:* 187
5.13–14: *2:* 229
5.14: *2:* 34
5.17: *1:* 144; *2:* 161, 173
5.17–18: *1:* 179
5.18: *1:* 183
5.45: *1:* 230
6.11: *1:* 56
7.11: *2:* 72, 208
7.13–14: *2:* 84
7.14: *1:* 260
7.23: *1:* 77
8.11: *1:* 191
8.12: *2:* 102
8.27: *1:* 346
8.29: *2:* 16
10.5–6: *2:* 172
10.8: *1:* 341; *2:* 61, 135, 229
10.23: *1:* 190
10.29–30: *1:* 77
11.12: *1:* 260
11.25–26: *2:* 101
11.27: *1:* 180
11.28: *1:* 280
11.28–29: *1:* 89
11.29: *2:* 170
12.8: *1:* 327
12.24: *2:* 17
12.29: *2:* 18
12.30: *1:* 260
12.38–40: *2:* 77
12.43–45: *2:* 117
13.11: *2:* 101
13.13: *1:* 255
13.16: *1:* 210
13.45–46: *1:* 290
13.47: *1:* 240
13.52: *2:* 63
14.14–21: *2:* 57
15.2: *1:* 316
15.3–6: *1:* 316
15.9: *1:* 319
15.11: *1:* 327
15.14: *1:* 111, 210; *2:* 60
15.24: *1:* 311; *2:* 8, 15, 111
15.26: *1:* 221
16.17: *1:* 272; *2:* 100
16.24: *2:* 200
16.26: *2:* 19
17.24: *2:* 47
18.2–3: *2:* 10

Matthew (*cont.*)
19.13–14: *2:* 10
19.14: *2:* 46
20.1–7: *2:* 33
20.6–7: *1:* 88
20.16: *2:* 181
21.9: *1:* 338
21.23: *2:* 17
21.23–27: *1:* 339
21.28–31: *1:* 178
21.38: *1:* 217, 287, 320, 349
22.1–14: *1:* 339
22.14: *2:* 109
22.16–21: *1:* 339
22.44: *1:* 349
23.13: *1:* 318
23.15: *1:* 318
23.17: *2:* 190
23.23: *1:* 218
23.32: *1:* 317
23.37–38: *2:* 146, 216
23.38: *2:* 203
24.2: *2:* 155
24.12: *1:* 96
24.14: *2:* 101
24.21: *1:* 222
24.22: *1:* 223
24.35: *1:* 183
24.45–47: *1:* 341
25.12: *2:* 120
25.24–27: *2:* 40
25.34: *1:* 337
26.24: *1:* 58
26.52: *1:* 269
27.25: *1:* 74, 324
28.10: *1:* 252
28.19: *2:* 134
28.20: *1:* 195

Mark
7.11: *1:* 316
8.34: *2:* 200
10.31: *2:* 181
12.7: *1:* 217
12.14: *1:* 217
12.36: *1:* 349

Luke
1.30–31: *1:* 89
1.30–32: *2:* 187
3.16: *2:* 144
3.23: *2:* 10
4.34: *2:* 16
8.10: *1:* 156, 255
8.31: *2:* 16
9.23: *2:* 200
9.47–48: *2:* 10
10.1: *2:* 54
10.19: *1:* 168; *2:* 185
10.22: *2:* 68
11.52: *2:* 186
12.49: *2:* 102
13.27: *2:* 120
14.15–24: *1:* 175
14.16–24: *2:* 122
14.18: *2:* 66, 185
14.20: *2:* 66, 185
16.14: *1:* 217
19.17: *1:* 282
20.14: *1:* 217
20.42–43: *1:* 349
21.19: *1:* 169
22.37: *2:* 76, 208

John
1.1: *1:* 283
1.3: *1:* 54, 65; *2:* 74
1.5: *1:* 147
1.9: *1:* 230
1.10: *1:* 229
1.11: *2:* 8
1.12: *2:* 210
1.14: *1:* 112, 146; *2:* 210
1.16: *1:* 351
1.17: *2:* 231
1.29: *1:* 281; *2:* 81
1.51: *1:* 194
2.15–16: *1:* 339
2.19: *1:* 329
2.21: *2:* 156
3.4: *2:* 126
3.9: *2:* 126
3.13: *2:* 143
3.16: *1:* 154; *2:* 196
3.17: *2:* 26
3.18: *2:* 54
3.29–30: *1:* 211
3.31: *2:* 143
3.34: *1:* 240; *2:* 136
4.10: *1:* 202
4.13–14: *2:* 52
4.23–24: *1:* 73
4.32: *1:* 178
4.34: *1:* 178
4.35–36: *2:* 194
5.24: *2:* 54
5.30: *1:* 117
5.37–38: *2:* 69
5.39: *1:* 51
5.39–40: *1:* 318; *2:* 123
5.45–46: *2:* 66
5.46: *1:* 318; *2:* 43, 159, 179
6.32–33: *1:* 341
6.33: *2:* 130, 190
6.35: *1:* 341
6.43–44: *2:* 143
6.44: *1:* 272
6.46: *2:* 175
6.47: *1:* 220
6.48: *1:* 341
6.49–51: *2:* 61
6.53: *2:* 27, 32
6.70: *1:* 71
7.4: *1:* 327
7.5: *1:* 327
7.16: *2:* 173
7.37: *1:* 202; *2:* 20, 52
7.39: *1:* 31, 149, 231
8.12: *2:* 34, 60
8.15: *1:* 117
8.16: *1:* 117
8.19: *2:* 93
8.23: *1:* 116

8.24: *1:* 111; *2:* 104
8.28: *2:* 208
8.31–32: *1:* 71
8.33: *1:* 71
8.34–36: *1:* 102; *2:* 32
8.39–40: *1:* 71
8.40: *1:* 71
8.44: *1:* 71
8.46: *2:* 133, 198
8.48: *2:* 172
9.16: *2:* 171
9.24: *2:* 75
9.29: *2:* 174
10.7: *2:* 4
10.9: *2:* 93
10.14: *1:* 280
10.16: *1:* 204, 222; *2:* 172
10.24–26: *2:* 172
10.30: *2:* 94
10.33: *1:* 346, 349
10.34: *1:* 78
12.19: *1:* 338
12.24: *1:* 75; *2:* 78, 129, 194
12.31–32: *1:* 216
12.32: *2:* 78
12.35: *1:* 332; *2:* 124
12.42: *1:* 288
12.47: *1:* 131
12.49: *2:* 173
14.2–3: *2:* 105
14.6: *1:* 284, 305; *2:* 4, 93, 161
14.9: *1:* 180; *2:* 68
14.10: *2:* 173, 175
14.24: *2:* 173
14.27: *2:* 17
14.30: *2:* 133, 198
14.31: *1:* 243
15.1–2: *1:* 342
15.5: *1:* 281; *2:* 196
15.14–15: *2:* 229
15.19: *1:* 244, 302
16.1: *1:* 286
16.14: *1:* 122
17.3: *1:* 201, 265
17.5: *1:* 348; *2:* 15, 76
17.6: *1:* 241, 307, 333
17.10: *1:* 307
17.11: *1:* 127
17.12: *1:* 254
17.17: *1:* 127, 191
17.21: *1:* 204; *2:* 94, 194
19.11: *1:* 156; *2:* 213
19.12: *2:* 212
19.15: *2:* 92, 212
19.33: *2:* 41
19.36: *2:* 40
20: *1:* 18
20.22: *1:* 16, 149, 231; *2:* 236

Acts
2.2–4: *1:* 195
2.3–4: *2:* 144
2.27: *2:* 234
2.33: *1:* 236
2.34: *1:* 349
2.47: *1:* 281
3.14: *2:* 212
3.15: *1:* 176; *2:* 212
4.12: *1:* 65, 256; *2:* 29, 92
4.27: *2:* 212
5.14: *1:* 281
5.28: *1:* 148, 321
7.51: *1:* 317
7.52: *1:* 88, 317
8.30: *2:* 123
8.34: *2:* 35
13.46–47: *1:* 190
14.16: *1:* 232
14.46–47: *2:* 100
15.10: *2:* 52
17.22–23: *1:* 203
17.28: *2:* 15
20.28: *2:* 176

Romans
1.7: *1:* 311
1.11: *1:* 341; *2:* 62
1.25: *1:* 254; *2:* 74
2.28–29: *1:* 150, 322
3.10: *1:* 288
3.12: *1:* 288
3.25: *2:* 160
4.1–12: *1:* 132
4.11: *1:* 204
4.13: *1:* 142
4.13–17: *1:* 133
4.15: *1:* 131, 167, 296
4.24: *1:* 134
5.2: *1:* 310; *2:* 49
5.5: *1:* 247
5.13: *1:* 167; *2:* 231
5.14: *1:* 62
5.18: *1:* 64
5.19: *1:* 64, 90; *2:* 128
5.20: *2:* 145, 158
6.4: *2:* 48, 188
6.9: *2:* 38
6.9–10: *2:* 77
7.5: *2:* 113
7.7: *1:* 167; *2:* 231
7.9: *1:* 167, 214
7.23–25: *2:* 113
8.3: *2:* 113, 208
8.3–4: *2:* 113, 135
8.7: *2:* 19
8.9: *1:* 208
8.15: *1:* 31, 35, 36, 143, 231; *2:* 26
8.17: *1:* 351
8.28–30: *1:* 61
8.29: *1:* 181, 281
8.32: *1:* 154; *2:* 8
8.35: *1:* 96, 352
9.2–3: *1:* 152
9.4: *2:* 181
9.6–7: *1:* 133
9.27: *1:* 298
10.1: *2:* 178

Romans (*cont.*)
10.4: *1:* 52, 237; *2:* 13, 53, 161
10.8–10: *1:* 220
11.5: *1:* 220; *2:* 77
11.7: *1:* 311
11.25: *1:* 155, 255, 311; *2:* 123, 155
11.25–26: *1:* 156
11.32: *2:* 233
12.1: *1:* 237; *2:* 230
12.2: *1:* 244; *2:* 218
12.11: *1:* 96; *2:* 38, 102, 144
12.12: *1:* 181
12.18: *1:* 249
13.12: *1:* 261; *2:* 37, 99
13.14: *1:* 169; *2:* 98, 219
14.9: *1:* 116; *2:* 82
15.19: *2:* 103
16.25–27: *1:* 62

1 Corinthians
1.3: *1:* 311
1.5: *1:* 340
1.13: *2:* 35
1.26–27: *1:* 233
1.30: *2:* 189, 200
3.2: *2:* 47
3.16: *1:* 208
3.19: *1:* 340
4.1: *1:* 163
4.9: *2:* 85
4.12: *1:* 269
4.15: *1:* 190, 195
5.7: *2:* 135, 236
6.3: *1:* 335
6.17: *1:* 126; *2:* 194, 222
6.19–20: *2:* 44
6.20: *2:* 135
7.19: *2:* 83
7.34: *1:* 207
9.24: *2:* 42
10.1–4: *2:* 92
10.4: *2:* 83
10.11: *2:* 24
10.13: *1:* 185, 223
10.17: *2:* 138
11.3: *1:* 157
11.26: *2:* 37
12.27: *1:* 281
13.1: *2:* 209
13.12: *1:* 265; *2:* 20, 41
14.20: *2:* 10
15.3–4: *1:* 219, 235
15.12: *1:* 219
15.20: *1:* 219
15.22: *1:* 63; *2:* 79
15.45: *1:* 63
15.47–49: *1:* 63
15.55: *2:* 197

2 Corinthians
1.2: *1:* 311
2.11: *1:* 64
2.14: *1:* 180
2.15: *2:* 139
3.6: *2:* 53, 231
3.9: *2:* 53, 126
3.13–17: *2:* 124
3.14–17: *2:* 70, 81
3.14–18: *1:* 31, 232
3.18: *2:* 70, 126
3.19: *2:* 127
4.4: *1:* 254
4.14: *1:* 219
5.13: *1:* 354
5.14–15: *2:* 44, 200
5.16: *2:* 38, 76
5.17: *1:* 53, 66, 90, 191, 254, 317; *2:* 9, 32, 232
5.19: *1:* 284
5.21: *2:* 135, 195
6.2: *1:* 256
6.11–14: *1:* 97, 216
6.11–15: *1:* 236
6.14–15: *2:* 141
6.17: *2:* 227
8.9: *1:* 305, 340
9.8: *1:* 335
9.10: *1:* 335
10.4: *2:* 224
11.2: *1:* 160, 204
12.9: *2:* 4
13.4: *1:* 338

Galatians
1.12: *2:* 100
2.16: *2:* 166
2.19–20: *2:* 200
2.20: *2:* 45
3.1–3: *2:* 233
3.3–4: *2:* 62
3.8–12: *1:* 166
3.11: *1:* 296; *2:* 53
3.13: *1:* 63, 90; *2:* 136
3.15–18: *1:* 167
3.19–26: *1:* 167
3.22: *2:* 233
3.24: *1:* 105; *2:* 25, 63, 217
3.27: *1:* 169
3.28: *2:* 138
4.4: *2:* 15, 76, 109
4.9: *1:* 309
4.19: *1:* 155
4.21–26: *2:* 237
4.21–5.1: *1:* 143
4.25: *1:* 149
4.29: *1:* 151
5.4: *2:* 62
5.4–5: *1:* 98; *2:* 233
5.16: *2:* 59
5.19: *2:* 119
5.24: *1:* 53; *2:* 59, 98, 188
6.17: *1:* 302

Ephesians
1.3: *1:* 221
1.7–12: *1:* 62
1.9–10: *1:* 25, 53

1.10: *1:* 43, 90
2.4–6: *2:* 139
2.6: *2:* 194
2.10: *2:* 188
2.13: *1:* 309; *2:* 203
2.14: *1:* 110, 300; *2:* 94
2.14–15: *1:* 191, 204
2.15: *1:* 110
2.15–16: *1:* 171, 191; *2:* 188
2.18: *1:* 73, 191, 305; *2:* 188
2.21–22: *2:* 230
2.22: *1:* 119, 245
3.18–19: *1:* 93
4.13: *2:* 48
4.22: *1:* 271; *2:* 219
4.30: *1:* 208
5.27: *1:* 204, 280
6.11: *2:* 141, 222
6.12: *2:* 185, 224
6.15: *2:* 41

Philippians
1.21: *1:* 352; *2:* 112, 230
2.7: *1:* 301
2.7–8: *1:* 347
2.8: *1:* 63, 90; *2:* 128
2.8–11: *1:* 350
2.9: *1:* 347
2.9–11: *1:* 236
2.10–11: *1:* 65, 118, 182; *2:* 209
2.11: *2:* 37
2.15–16: *2:* 34
3.5: *1:* 354
3.6: *1:* 264
3.7: *1:* 298
3.8: *1:* 265
3.8–9: *2:* 187
3.13: *1:* 346
4.1: *1:* 207
4.3: *1:* 74

Colossians
1.16: *1:* 65
1.18: *1:* 280
2.3: *1:* 51, 213, 340; *2:* 4, 102
2.9: *2:* 25, 78
2.11: *2:* 83
2.20: *1:* 223
3.2: *1:* 256
3.3: *1:* 308; *2:* 48
3.3–4: *1:* 224
3.5: *2:* 59, 98
3.9: *2:* 188
3.10: *1:* 271; *2:* 219

1 Thessalonians
4.14: *1:* 219
5.5: *1:* 261; *2:* 99

2 Thessalonians
2.3: *1:* 253
2.4: *1:* 222

1 Timothy
1.8–10: *1:* 61
2.5: *1:* 305
2.6: *2:* 142
3.16: *1:* 272
4.1: *1:* 98
4.7–8: *1:* 265
6.16: *2:* 25

2 Timothy
2.12: *1:* 351
2.24: *1:* 249
3.12: *1:* 185
4.7: *1:* 337

Titus
3.5: *1:* 89, 256; *2:* 164

Hebrews
1.1: *1:* 225
1.1–2: *1:* 182; *2:* 210
1.2: *1:* 212
1.6: *1:* 349
1.9: *1:* 195
1.13: *1:* 349
1.14: *1:* 194
2.6: *1:* 45
2.9: *1:* 65
2.11: *2:* 44
2.11–12: *1:* 121
2.13: *1:* 310
2.17: *2:* 159
3.1: *1:* 111, 131
3.2: *2:* 175
3.7–11: *2:* 188
3.12–19: *2:* 189
3.17: *1:* 297
4.1–3: *2:* 189
4.4: *1:* 45
4.12: *2:* 145
4.13: *2:* 85
5.4: *1:* 121
5.5: *2:* 159
5.5–6: *1:* 121
5.6: *1:* 131
5.13–14: *2:* 48
5.14: *1:* 353
6.13–18: *1:* 138
7.3: *1:* 109, 125, 128
7.4–7: *1:* 128
7.7: *1:* 108, 123, 166
7.10: *1:* 108
7.11–12: *1:* 129
7.14: *1:* 129, 295
7.15–17: *1:* 129
7.17: *1:* 131
7.18–19: *1:* 106
7.19: *2:* 105
7.22: *1:* 131; *2:* 103
7.25: *2:* 159
7.26: *2:* 9, 104, 142
7.27–28: *2:* 159
7.28: *2:* 159
8.7–12: *1:* 106
8.13: *1:* 106, 280
9.9: *2:* 103
9.12: *2:* 160
9:12–13: *2:* 163

Hebrews (*cont.*)
9.13: *2:* 127
9.14: *2:* 197, 236
9.24: *2:* 105, 167, 193
10.1: *2:* 36
10.4: *1:* 130, 281; *2:* 27, 234
10.14: *2:* 160
10.19–20: *1:* 113
10.20: *2:* 167
10.28: *1:* 184; *2:* 52, 109
10.36: *1:* 170
11.5: *1:* 79
11.7: *1:* 93
11.10: *1:* 77, 244, 267; *2:* 21, 111, 234
11.17–19: *1:* 159
11.39–40: *1:* 304
11.40: *2:* 36
12.12–13: *1:* 262
12.16: *1:* 172
12.23: *1:* 72
12.24: *1:* 75
12.29: *2:* 25
13.12: *2:* 200
13.14: *1:* 77, 244, 267; *2:* 21
13.20: *2:* 157

James
1.1: *1:* 327
1.12: *2:* 84
1.17: *1:* 305
2.23: *1:* 160
3.2: *2:* 325
4.4: *2:* 19
4.10: *1:* 249

1 Peter
1.10–12: *1:* 254
1.16: *2:* 227
1.18–20: *2:* 43
2.1: *2:* 227
2.2: *1:* 237
2.2–3: *2:* 188
2.5: *2:* 113
2.6: *1:* 194
2.9: *1:* 310; *2:* 108, 138, 200
2.9–10: *1:* 200
2.11: *1:* 211
2.16: *2:* 230
2.22: *2:* 160, 195
2.24: *2:* 128, 167, 204
3.18: *2:* 46
3.18–20: *2:* 145
3.20–21: *1:* 93
3.21: *2:* 202
4.5–6: *1:* 249
5.1–2: *1:* 201
5.4: *1:* 337

2 Peter
1.4: *1:* 23, 32, 33, 34, 64, 178, 181; *2:* 94, 110, 197
1.19: *1:* 261; *2:* 60
2.21–22: *2:* 117
3.13: *1:* 91

1 John
2.1–2: *2:* 159, 167, 205
2.16: *1:* 83
2.19: *1:* 98
2.27: *1:* 354
3.16: *2:* 128
3.24: *1:* 64

Jude
6: *1:* 82
23: *2:* 98

Revelation
1.4: *2:* 39
1.8: *2:* 39
3.5: *1:* 74
4.8: *2:* 39
11.17: *2:* 39
13.8: *1:* 74
21.5: *1:* 53

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